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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Koya, one of the several Dravidian-speaking tribes of South Orissa, numbering about 38,000 according to the Census of 1961, are found distributed in the Malkangiri subdivision of the Koraput district. The Malkangiri area is heavily forested and is the home of several other tribes such as the Bondo, Shumiyá, Didayi, and Feroja. The following account of the history of the area is found in the Koraput District Gazetteer :

"Very little is known of the ancient history of the hill country of Jeypore. Hidden in its forests there are temples and monuments which bear the names of Kings who reigned many centuries ago, but nothing is now known of these ancient dynasties except that they passed away leaving the land to the jungle and the jungle tribes. But these remains are so scanty and the silence of the chronicles of India regarding this country is so complete that it must be supposed that such civilisation as the district never knew in the remote past was of brief duration and small intensity. The history of the land is the history of the primitive tribes who have made it their home, and of this scarcely anything is known. No doubt the earliest inhabitants were the wild hunter tribes which still inhabit the hilliest parts of the

district and are still most tenacious of their old customs. Later to arrive were the tribes of Dravidian origin, and particularly the Kondhs. There are signs that the Kondhs entered the district by a gradual infiltration from the north. With coming of these strangers in increasing numbers it is probable that the deforestation of the district, which must one time have been a vast jungle, began to proceed with increased rapidity.

"The earliest historical record in the district is an inscription at Podagoda near Umarkot in the Nowrangpur taluk, in Sanskrit characters of the fourth century. It states that Bhavadatta of Nala family regained the kingdom lost during the time of his father and that he established on the Highway aśram for wayfarers and a temple for the worship of Hari Hara. In a forest within a few miles of Podagoda is an inscription in Nagari characters of the tenth century, which speaks of the gifts of a village called Pappalavandi (possibly Pappadashandi, near Nowrangpur). A Telugu inscription in the temple of Danavada in Bastar State records that in the year A. D. 1061 a king of the Nagavamsi line purchased a piece of land from a cultivator at Borigamra and gave it to the god Bhairava. A large

festival to Bhairava is still held every year at Borigumma. Western Jaypore thus probably formed part of the Kingdom of the Naga family who ruled in Bastar in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

"There is evidence that the wild forest country of Malkangiri has known a former civilization. In Kondakamboru there are two inscriptions recording a gift to the god Nilakantheswara by the queen of Pandu Singh in the year A. D. 1376. Kondakamboru is called Kamhuliri. Singarazu, the husband of Ambika, is said to have been lord of Kondakambati (possibly another name for Kondakamboru) from A. D. 1376 to A. D. 1381.

"Antiquities in the district are few, but certain old temples that are still standing in the neighbourhood of Nandapur and images which have been dug up near Jaypore bear unmistakable signs of Jain Origin. But there is no record either inscription or traditional to tell us who were the Jain inhabitants of this country and when they flourished."

Physical aspects of the Region

The Malkangiri subdivision is but a vast jungle with the eastern Ghats, which has an elevation of 3,000 feet as its eastern boundary. The northern region has an elevation of 800 feet near the foot of the Ghat. From north to south the elevation gradually diminishes and the southernmost point has an elevation of 400 feet where the rivers Sileru and Sabari join and flow together with a name 'China Godabari' towards the junction at

Konnasaram where they meet river Godavari. The Sileru and Sabari rivers serve as the eastern and western fringes of the territory of the Malkangiri subdivision. The rest of the subdivision is full of forested plains with a number of rocky wooded hills, some of them rising to a considerable height. The subdivision is poor with regard to its forest wealth. There is little good timber and only are found on the Ghats and in the northern region Teak is found.

The southern region is full of trees like *Bauhinia Latifolia*, *Kendu*, *Kuam*, *Blackberry*, etc. However, the rich growth of bamboos are carried to the junction of Sileru and Sabari rivers at Motu and then floated down in the China Godavari and Godavari rivers to reach Rajmahendri town on the banks of Godavari. Unidentified grass with a height of 10' sometimes cover many square miles of this subdivision which provide good fodder for the good number of cows and bullocks possessed by the Koyas of this region.

The subdivision was famous for its wild game, rare and precious games like bison and wild buffaloes are found in the eastern and western region. Leopards, tigers, wild dogs, bears, wild boars and wolves are found widespread. Chital or spotted deer, Sambar and barking deer also abound. The Koyas are good hunters and due to their practice of hunting throughout the year which adds to their food economy, the forests are becoming thin of wild game which have been scared away to other regions.

Pencocks, wild fowls and other birds also are common in these forests.

The rainfall of this region is about 58". Extreme heat is felt in summer. Due to heavy rainfall the plains become swampy and a breeding place for mosquitoes. Recently, steps are being taken by Government to eradicate malaria but the success of programme is still awaited.

History

Malkangiri was a Taluk since 1872 and recently in 1963 it has been made a subdivision of the Koraput district. "Local tradition carries back the early history of the Taluk to the times of one Orjun Mallick, who was set upon by confederacy which included the Jeypore Raja and was slain in a fort near Karukonda. Jeypore obtained the Taluk, and granted it on service tenure to the Oriya Palk who had shot Orjun Mallick in the fight whose family held it hereditarily until recently. They are called the Tat Rajas and apparently did much for the country, old hamlets, groves, deserted tanks and forgotten forts testifying to their efforts. About 1838, the last of the line Paramananda, died; and his widow's dewan, Erramma, Rara, being overthrown by a faction, produced the aid of some Rohillas from Hyderabad, regained the upper hand, and cut off the noses of four of his chief opponents. These men went and complained to the Agent to the Governor, Mr. Reade, and he sent up a party of

Sibbandis who captured Erramma Raja. The traitor was sentenced to transportation for life.

Soon afterwards Paramananda's widow died, and her daughter Bangara Devi succeeded. But all authority vested in one Sangad Patra, a very turbulent character, who gave trouble by refusing to pay six Kattabadi to Jeypore and by insisting on levying *moturpals* and *sagar* in spite of the Agent's orders to the contrary. He was eventually imprisoned in 1865, and about 1869 Bangara Devi obtained a lease of the Taluk from Jeypore for Rs. 3,500. Her exactions led to much discontent and in 1872 she was deposed and granted a village for maintenance, the Raja appointing a new manager.

About this time Malkangiri was made the headquarters of a Taluk and a Magistrate was stationed there. In 1879 and 1880 occurred the "Rampa-Shuri" (rebellion) which spread to this Taluk. Since then there has been very little trouble in the Taluk, and a steady increase of prosperity (Koraput district Gazetteer)".

Communication

Though there has been some recent improvements, communication is still poor. A Katcha road connected the Taluk with Jeypore town previously. This road was motorable for only one half of the year, because of the river Pangam which was not bridged. At present this has become an all-weather road for approaching the Malkangiri subdivision headquarters. This

road extends up to the southern-most point of the Malkangiri subdivision at Motu where the rivers Sileru and Sabari form a confluence which is thereafter called "China Godavari" and ultimately joins the Godavari at Rameswaram. The road was frequently cut by small rivulets which have strong currents during the rainy season. Mention may be made of river Poteru which cuts this road at a distance of about 17 miles from Malkangiri. This river which has been bridged recently kept the southern part of the Taluk completely isolated from the Malkangiri subdivisional headquarters for about 8 months a year. The distance covered by this main road from Malkangiri to Motu is about 102 kilometres. The road was jeepable but not without great difficulty, during the period from December to mid June. Another Kutcha road diverged from the Malkangiri-Motu road at the fifteenth kilometre towards Padia where it touched the western fringe of the Malkangiri subdivision and then taking turn to the south on the western boundary formed a semi-circle joining the main road at village Pungada lying at a distance of about 72 kilometres from Malkangiri. A Kutcha road also diverged towards the west from Kalinela which is at a distance of 40 kilometres from Malkangiri on this main road and joined the other road near Padia via Venkatapalem. There is another road of the same type which branches out from Govindapalli at a distance of 50 kilometres north from the subdivisional headquarters and going towards east reaches Malkangiri forming a

circle, via Ballimela. The road was a Kutcha one previously and was motorable only during the period from December to June. At present all the roads mentioned above have been improved as a result of implementation of Dandakaranya and Ballimela Hydro-electricity Projects.

During recent years new roads have also been constructed as part of the Dandakaranya and Ballimela Projects. Steps are being taken by the Project Authorities also to construct bridges and culverts on the main road from Malkangiri to Motu and make it an all-weather road approachable during all seasons.

The Koyas and their Neighbours

The Koyas constitute the principal tribe of Malkangiri and widely distributed throughout this area. But it can be discerned that the Koyas gradually thin down as we go towards the east and north-eastern region. Their concentration is limited to the entire southern portion and some portions in the north up to Mattu lying at a distance of 30 miles north of Malkangiri where they come in contact with the Ronas and Bhumiya. The total population of Koyas, according to the 1961 Census is 35,284. There has been considerable migration of Koyas from Bastar area of Madhya Pradesh

The northern region is inhabited by Ronas and Bhumiya who have become Hinduised and speak a very crude type of Oriya which is locally known as *desi Oriya* and

is, not without difficulty, understood by the Oriyas. Other neighbours of the Koyas here are Matias who also call themselves Hindus. The Matias practise cultivation. The Bhumiya and Banaas are professional wood cutters in the Matill and Govindapalli area which is full of teak and other valuable trees. The Bondas inhabit the Eastern Ghats in the north-eastern region of the Taluk and practically, have no connection with the Koyas. Their only meeting place is the weekly market at Matill where a few plain Bondas come for marketing. It is only the Koyas inhabiting the northern region who come in close contact with the Bondas. The rest are as ignorant about the Bondas as any layman might be.

In the south, the Koyas are the only tribal community. Since long, there has been migration of various other communities to this area and they share this region with the Koyas. The immigrants are limited in number and live scattered. They are Muslims, Telgus, Doms, who call themselves and also are known locally as Valmikias and Boiparis. The Boiparis are a group of fair complexioned, Hindispeaking people who have migrated to this region from the adjoining area of Madhya Pradesh and claim to be a professional group of traders. They live, wherever they are found, with the Koyas in the same village. The men folk provide dancing dresses for the Koya 'wade' or magicians and other requirements, and receive goats, poultry and pulses in exchange. Their women folk are seen to sell different types of sweet cakes to the Koyas in exchange of paddy.

rice and pulses etc. But these Boiparis are limited to a region within 10 miles south of Malkangiri, beyond which, they are not found.

The Doms, Muslims and Telgus carry on with various types of occupation but chiefly earn their livelihood by exploiting the Koyas by various means. They are found scattered all over the taluk but are very negligible in numbers.

The Name Koya

The members of the Koya tribe inhabiting the entire Taluk call themselves 'Koyas' or 'Kotlor' meaning people. It is interesting to note that the members of the same tribe inhabiting the adjacent regions of Madhya Pradesh and East Godavari district call themselves as 'Matias' and 'Doctas' respectively. This is evident from the discussions made by Shri Wilfrid Grigson in his book 'The Maria Goods of Bastar'. In this monograph he has tried to show the distinction between the Hill Marias and the Risenhoch Marias. The latter are similar to the so called Koyas of Malkangiri.

"The Gund says Grigson wherever he speaks his own language, from Central India to the Eastern Ghats and Hyderabad, calls himself 'Kol' or 'Kotlor', yet only in the Madras and Hyderabad, reports is he called by a name approaching this in sound, Koya, and in the literature of the Central Provinces there has, therefore, been a tendency to restrict this name to Teluguised members of the race." He also states that primitive tribes are more usually known by the

local Hindu name for them. "So over much of India the prevailing Hindu name Gond, and not Kol, is used". The Koyas of Malkangiri also call themselves Kōtor. It is obvious, therefore, that the Koyas are a branch of the Gond-speaking people. The name Koya, presumably, therefore, is a name given to them by the local people since time immemorial. References from the Godavari District Gazetteer*, Thurston's "Tribes and Castes of Southern India", Indian Antiquary, Vol. V, also mentioned that there are Koyas in the East Godavari district and Hyderabad now included in Andhra Pradesh. Grigson's "Maria Gonds of Bastar" also mentions of a small number of Koyas in the Bastar State of Madhya Pradesh which is adjacent to Malkangiri Taluk. But Grigson tries to prove that the Koyas are nothing but the so called Bison-horn, Marias, a name coined by him to distinguish between the Hill Marias and the Bison-horn Maria on the basis of certain differences in their cultural traits. He also merges the 4,088 persons returned at the census of 1931 as Koyas with the Bison-horn Marias. He does it on the basis of his study of Bison-horn-Maria culture which is almost same as that of the Koyas. But he further tries to show a real distinction between the Bison-horn-Marias and the plains Koyas living on the banks of the Godavari. The latter according to him have become an endogenous group and name themselves as 'Doria'. "Inter-marriage still takes place between the Marias of Sukma and the 'Koyas' of Malkangiri". During the period of my investigation I

did not find any Dorias in the Malkangiri Taluk. Thus, it appears that the Koyas of Malkangiri are more connected with the Bison-horn-Marias as suggested also by Wilfrid Grigson. But there are certain points which have yet to be clarified. I was told by my Koya informants of village Sikapalli that the Koyas are known as Marias in the Sukuma and Bastar region of Madhya Pradesh. The name Bison-horn-Maria has been used by Grigson to distinguish the Hill Marias who are more primitive than the Bison-horn-Marias and also in the description of traits in both the cultures in the 'Maria Gonds of Bastar'. We also find considerable difference, between Koya and Maria though similarities are also not wanting. If it is to be believed that the local Hindu name for primitive tribes are more useful then, how is it that in one region the same people should be called by two different names such as Marias and Koyas*. We do not find the answer to this question in Grigson's monograph. It may also be mentioned that anywhere in Malkangiri Subdivision the Koyas are neither known nor call themselves as 'Marias' or 'Marias'.

The Koya of Malkangiri Subdivision, though culturally a homogeneous group, can be divided into two groups according to the proximity of the local population of the subdivision with which they come in contact and by whom they have been found profoundly influenced in many respects. The Koyas living north of the subdivisional headquarters up to Matteli and in south up to Manyemkonda are more primitive than the southerners

living within villages Mallavaram and Motla, the southernmost point of the subdivision. The Southern Koyas are greatly influenced by Telugu people who come from adjacent areas of Andhra Pradesh and most of the people living at Motla happen to be Telugu business men. Certain points of differences between the two groups are given below.

Dress and Ornaments

The Northern Koyas usually wear loin clothes except few headmen and wealthy men who wear the loin in a manner which covers their buttocks. The teluguised Koyas of South use bigger cloths and sometimes use 'dhoti' covering the portion from waist to knee in the telugu manner. Shirts have become common among both types and it is a common thing to see a Koya going to a market or to a festival putting on a shirt over the loin cloth.

The women of these two regions are conspicuously different from one another in their dress style. The southern Koya women are hardly distinguishable from the telugu women. They wear saris, handloom and mill made, in the Telugu manner. Blouse and bangles are becoming common among young Koya maidens of the South which they purchase from the local markets at Mallavaram and Khunta in Madhya Pradesh, which is adjacent to Motla. The picture is completely different in the northern region. The Koya women, here use very little cloth. They wear a loin cloth covering the

portion from waist to knee and knitted just below the navel. Generally they do not use a cloth to cover their breasts except when going to a market or a festival. One piece of cloth is loosely wrapped covering one hip and the opposite shoulder over which their necklaces rest. This practice is becoming common but women going without covering their breasts also are seen, mostly while they are at work.

Most of the Koyas now wear a turban on their head while going for a dance, a distant market or to visit kinmen. One end of the turban is made to hang in front and is brought behind the neck and over a shoulder. This is only among the male Koyas.

So far ornaments are concerned the difference among the Koyas of the two region is also quite marked. The necklaces are called 'Nedek' or 'Nede' and are used in large varieties of size, material and colour by the northern Koya women. Necklaces of beads of various sizes and colours are very much liked and are purchased from the local markets. Armlets of various size and weight made of brass and aluminium are used, so much so, that the breasts get completely covered up by them. Armlets and bangles are also worn in huge quantity. The ears are completely covered up with ear-rings of various shape and size. This is fully absent among the southern Koya women. They wear very little ornaments. Heavy ornament of neck and hand are not used and glass bangles have become very much common among them.

Language

The language spoken by the Koyas fitting to the Gondi dialect of the Dravidian group. This dialect also differs among the two groups of the north and the south. To certain extent the difference may be adduced to the fact that the vocabulary of the Koyas is very limited; thus they depend on the major lingua-franca of the region in which they live. There has been incorporation of Telugu and Hindi and Oriya words in the language of the southern and northern Koyas, respectively. This was gathered from the Koya students of Gompakunda Ashram School where the southern and northern Koya boys live together and find the difference in their respective dialects.

From above descriptions it is evident that the Koyas of the two regions of the subdivision are more or less similar linguistically, the slight differences being due to contact with Oriya or Telugu speakers. The southerners have been much influenced in dress, ornaments and hair style by the Telugus while the northerners have retained their primitiveness to a great extent.

Koya Settlements

Koya settlements lie in the midst of forests in patches of clearings. Except a few villages that lie by the side of the roads that pass through their country, most villages are approached by narrow footpaths in the forests. There is no specific boundary to demarcate the villages but the garden enclosures are the first sign of the villages that a visitor sees from a distance. Sometimes the cluster of "Urekalk" or

the menhirs erected in memory of dead ancestors also indicate the approach of a village. Several footpaths lead on to the village from all sides.

The Koya villages are more or less permanent in nature but there is a tendency to shift the village from place to place. The Koyas have great fear of supernatural powers. The outbreak of epidemics for men as well as cattle or attacks by wild animals on lives or any natural calamity by which the people may suffer loss are sufficient reasons for the Koya to abandon a village site without hesitation and shift it to another place which might be situated very near or at a little distance from the deserted one. The village Sikopali was first established at a place where the village market is held at present. But it was shifted to the present site when the *perwa* or the priest of the village found the former site ominous due to the outbreak of diseases like smallpox (*amralli*). Economic factors also play a part in the shifting of villages. Formerly the Koyas were depending mostly on shifting cultivation by burning a patch of jungle (*Lankapothanadi*) and sowing pulses, beans and millet. After harvest another patch would be taken up for such cultivation. A detailed description of the practice will be given later. When the neighbouring forests become thin by constant clearing the village is abandoned and a site near a virgin forest is selected for settlement. But the practice of shifting a whole village solely for this purpose is now being given up because of Government measures

to stop the practice of shifting cultivation to save the forests. Villages have now become settlements of permanent nature. A single family or a group of families sometimes shift to some other villages or a site for reasons already stated above. This practice is still in vogue and in many villages the author has found people migrating from one to the other villages.

The village sites with their surrounding land and forest, are said to belong to the founder's clan. A village is mainly inhabited by one major clan. Examples may be given of village Sitapali with a majority of people having the surname Maikanta. There are other villages also, which have the majority of their population belonging to a particular clan. But people of other clans from whom women are taken, are also found residing in the founder's clan.

In certain areas there are small hamlets of a village which are locally known as Guda. These hamlets are virtually small villages with their headmen and the same village institutions. Though they are supposed to be subordinate to their parent villages, however, they assert their separateness in almost all matters. The village Sitapali has such a Guda or hamlet named Lemagoda, but on investigation, it was found that Lemagoda had its own separate identity in most matters except certain religious festivals which were observed jointly with the villagers of Sitapali.

When the practice of shifting a village to another place was in vogue, it was the pado or the headman with the help of Parna or the

priest who took the responsibility of selecting a site in the month of Diwad, corresponding to October-November. Some trees are felled and a patch is cleared. The priest takes a handful of grain in a leaf cup (Dopa) in the evening and pours it over the cleared patch of land and chants some prayer to the earth god Bhumi. The grain is covered by the leaf cup and in the morning they come to see if ants have disturbed the rice. If the rice is found undisturbed the site is thought to be a good one and then houses are raised. If the rice is disturbed the site is abandoned and a new site is searched.

On entering a Koya village what comes to notice first is the irregular distribution of houses throughout the village. They are so unsystematically scattered all over that no regular street or a row of houses is found. There are open spaces in between them which are used to put their cages. This is also same with the Koyas of southern region although they have been considerably influenced by the Telugus in constructing their houses.

The number of houses in a Koya village varies from ten to thirty or more. The author has not seen in the course of his visit, the number of houses in any village exceeding one hundred. But villages with such large number of houses are rare. In Sitapali, the number does not exceed sixty. As a consequence of the Government policy of restricting shifting cultivation and the formation of new villages, the existing villages are getting more densely populated than before.

Each family has two or three houses round the main houses which is constructed by the head of the family when he first settles in that village. When the sons get married, they construct new houses to live with their wives near the parents house.

The Koya settlements have a central place which is called *Fun Dapay* or the dancing ground. This is a wide open space, sometimes situated in front of the house of the priest or the headman. But this is not strictly adhered to and the boys and girls dance in place according to their convenience. The village burial ground is always situated at a distance from the village to keep the ghosts and spirits of the dead away from the village.

The Houses

The size of the house varies according to the capacity and need of the individual constructing the house. The size of the house often indicates the economic status of the individual. The wealthier man needs a bigger house for storing his grains and other household articles whereas a poor man has but a small house to accommodate everything within it. There are houses, which have a length of thirty to forty feet and a breadth of 15 feet and 8 feet, respectively. This also depends on the pattern of labour of the Koya society. The houses are constructed on basis of co-operative labour. The individual constructing a house asks the villagers to help him and after the general frame work is completed by the men the women and small girls take part in plastering the house with mud and cow-dung. After the

completion of the house the owner kills a pig and distributes pork among the workers. Some part of the meat is kept reserved for a feast. The workers sit together and eat the feast given by the owner. The owner can employ as many or as few labourers as his capacity and needs permit.

In the construction of a house there is remarkable difference in the workmanship between the Koyas of southern and northern regions. The walls in the southern region are mostly built of mud on split bamboo and pole stockadings of uniform size. Each house has a Varendah to pass to enter the house. This Varendah is comparatively much higher in southern region and sometimes a small Varendah is seen encircling the entire house which is completely absent in the houses of northern Koyas. Inside the houses a partition is made in order to make two rooms. One of these rooms is called 'Wija Lon' or the store room for grains. The other is the Kitchen or "Rana gad". In the store room not only grains but also dried fruits and *Kenda* and *Mohal* flowers are stored to be used during the scarcity period. Generally a loft is made of bamboo and wood and on these the grains are stored in baskets made of leaves of *Shall* creepers or bamboo central

The Varendah (*corra*) is of much importance to the Koyas and, in fact, it is the most frequently used place in the entire house. From morning to evening all types of household works are done here by

both men and women. Occasionally there may be a fireplace where cooking is sometimes done. Liked or a basket which hangs from a beam of the roof by ropes is used for cradling babies on the verandah. This is a place where the guests are entertained. The wall which stands as a partition between the verandah and the inside of the house is used from the outside to be the hanging place of all sorts of household articles such as bows and arrows, the *doi* or drum, the *parma* disk or the dancing head dress *koisiri* or the sickle-like knives, flutes, *akum* or musical horns, etc. These are hung from pegs on the wall made by hanging deer or antelope horns or bamboo pegs. The members of the house also sleep on the verandah during all seasons. There are smaller beds in the verandah for smoking rice. The surface of the verandah is raised a little higher than the surface of the floor inside the house. Thus the verandah serves as a part and parcel of the house and from outside appears as an open hall. The whole house is surrounded by a neat fencing made of split bamboo.

There are no windows in the houses; so complete darkness reigns inside the house during day time and without a lamp it is difficult step inside. A small space is left in the partition of the inside rooms making a door way to pass from one room to the other. The first room is used as kitchen. In one corner of this room water and rice beer pots are kept.

The roof of the houses are thatched with *piri*, a type of jungle

grass which is found in abundance in the nearby forests. These are collected every year and made to dry before being used for thatching the houses.

Each house has a side shed for pigs and goats. Sometimes these sheds are situated within the fencing (*sofhu*) of the house. Fencing on all sides of a house is a regular feature in the Koya settlements. The wattle work is highly decorative.

Each house has a gods or kitchen garden which is situated behind it. The kitchen garden is also fenced all around and the Koyas grow tobacco, mustard and vegetables like tomato, brinjal and beans. Sometimes these kitchen gardens are situated inside the village in the wide open spaces that have been acquired by the first settlers of the village. Cattle dung is gathered in a heap inside the garden by the Koya women and girls. They are spread all over the garden before sowing any seeds.

The trees that are commonly found in a Koya village are *Yak* or *Jelu* (*Ficus latifolia*), *pa* (*Caryota urens*), *Kurum* and *Jamu* which are not felled while clearing a patch either for settlement or for cultivation. The two trees mentioned first provide the Koya with substantial liquor without which the Koyas say they cannot survive. The flowers of *Mahul* tree are dried and stored in large quantities to be used in times of food scarcity. To the south the abundance of *Mahul* tree diminishes and instead palm trees abound. Here, the Koyas

depend much on the palm trees for liquor and pull on for days together without food with a belly full of palm liquor.

In some villages a house is erected which is called *Piken-kudimo* or the house for the unmarried young girls which serves the purpose of a dormitory. The girls gather there during the night for singing and gossiping and sleep together. But this practice is gradually being abandoned and in many villages the author was told that they are not erecting such a house in these days. The girls sleep in a house of a old woman or a widow for the same purpose.

In all villages a guest house or *Chandi* is erected as a shelter for any outsider or Government servant. The headman, with the help of the villagers, erects this house and maintains in good conditions.

Living Conditions:—

Sanitation and Hygiene in the Village

The appearance of the Koya villages at the first sight indicates the callousness of the Koyas towards sanitary conditions. All over the village the sight of uncleanliness becomes the common experience for any newcomer to the Koya country. Cocks, pigs, goats and cows defecate anywhere and everywhere of which little notice is taken. Dogs, pigs and goats frequent the area or the verandah attached to the house and make it dirty. No serious attention is paid to keep the house clean. The open spaces in front of

the house are used for tethering cattle as a result of which these become very unclean with heaps of dung. The dung is cleared in the morning by the female members and heaped in the guda or the kitchen garden. The open spaces before the houses are swept only during morning. There is no drainage system in any of the Koya villages but as has been first noted before, due to the undulating surface of this area each settlement has a natural drainage, during heavy rainfall. Nevertheless, the villages become damp and muddy during rains, with small pools of dirty water inside the village. It is only the villages, which are situated on hill slopes, that are less dirty during rainy season.

The Houses

The houses, as mentioned above, are equally dirty in all respects. Though occasional plastering of cow dung is made by the women, the house as a whole, appears like a stone house of dirt. The verandah which is an essential part of the house is frequented by domesticated pigs, dogs, goats, cocks hence becomes unclean. The inside of a house is generally clean where cooking is done. The place where lands or rice beet pots are kept are neat and clean. The insanitary conditions of the northern Koyas do not hold true in the villages of the southern Koyas. The houses and the open spaces before them indicate the positive attitude of the villages with regard to maintain cleanliness. The houses are regularly plastered with cow dung once in a week and mostly

swept twice a day. The high verandahs which are so neatly plastered can be compared with any admirable sitting platform of a Hindu family house and where one completely feels at home. The open spaces before each house are not used for lathering cattle as is done by the northerners.

Bodily Cleanliness

The Koyas are equally careless in keeping their bodies clean. The dress which they wear are dirty and are not washed frequently. The womenfolk wash the dirty clothes at long intervals of days—once or twice a month. They do not hesitate to sit on a dirty place. While taking bath they put off the clothes and enter the water naked. They do not take pains to wash their bodies properly nor use oil regularly for their hair. The only oil they use is from the dried seeds of the fruit of Mahul tree. This is preserved very carefully and the women use it while going for dancing on festive occasions.

The Koyas wash their teeth with tooth-sticks but cleaning of the mouth is not properly done. The tongue is not properly cleaned and after cleaning the tongue water is not used to clean the mouth. They wipe themselves with leaves after defecation.

The Koyas use leaves for taking their meals and the womenfolk collect leaves of which leaf plates and cups (Dappa) are prepared. The Koyas wash their hands and mouth before and after taking meals.

The Koyas habitually spit wherever they happen to sit and gossip. This is not an exception even when they are sitting inside a room. With regard to bodily cleanliness the southern Koyas seem to be more particular and in many respects they behave and act like any other Hindus.

The use of cheap soap is becoming common among the young boys and girls who purchase them from the local market. These are used on festive occasions while taking bath. The author has seen weather middle aged Koyas also interested in using the cheap soaps.

Water-Supply

The Koya women fetch water from the Kuti or the water deposits in the lowlying lands, where cultivation is made. These are very common among the northern Koyas. There are large tracts or lowlying rice cultivating fields in one corner of which there happens to be a large pool of water. There is no restriction in bringing water for drinking purposes though the land might belong to another individual. These pools of water begin to dry up during summer and the Koyas dig pits in the bed of the pondland. There are also places where water does not dry.

There are small rivulets which also pass by most of these Koya villages. The Koya women also fetch water from these sources. During summer they dig a little and get water from the bed of the river.

The little water source is good for both bathing and for drinking. The water is not boiled before drinking. The problem of water becomes acute during summer and the author has seen people coming from a distance of two or three miles to the 'Kuta' or the small pool in the rice fields, for purposes of bathing and washing clothes. The Koyas say that during summer they carry water bottles made of gourds while they go to any distant place because water is not available during long walks in these regions.

In village Sikapali a well has been sunk by the Government. The villagers never use the water from well for drinking. On enquiry the author was told that the well water is not fresh because it is stagnant. They believe that water in a river or pool in rice fields is fresh. The other reason is the water in the well is sweet (Minkia) hence not suitable for drinking purposes. In many villages like Hariwada, Gompakonda, Dharmapali the author was given the same reply as at Sikapali with regard to the use of well water. The well water in village Sikapali is used for bathing and washing purpose.

In village Mahavarman which is inhabited by the indigenous Koyas a completely different picture is seen. There is a well sunk by the Government and in morning and evening a huge crowd of women is seen around the well who come to fetch water for drinking and other purposes. On enquiry the villagers said that they have become habituated to well water and find the water suitable for all types of use.

Disease and Treatment

The various types of diseases, that the Koyas suffer from are attributed to either supernatural aggression or sorcery. If a family continues to suffer from diseases for a considerable period they abandon the site and settle in a fresh one to get rid of the evil look of the supernatural elements. Any deviation from the normal life is thought to be caused by supernatural forces. If a baby does not suckle its mother's breast which he was doing normally is attributed to the evil eye of a spirit. Any natural calamity like the attack of a tiger or a bear is also thought to be caused by the angry spirits or gods.

The Koyas have their traditional way of dealing with all these problems. It is a common sight in the Koya area to find a wadde who would be engaged in chanting incantations, either to ward off the evil spirit or pacifying a god who might have made an aggression against the person. In each village waddes are found more than one in number. Among these some specialize in giving medicines. 'Mat' for different diseases and others cure by way of divination.

The Koya word for disease is 'nupa' which is distinguished from the wounds, cuts or burns though they would take the help of the same wadde to get medicine for their cure. The Koyas explain the symptoms of their disease to the 'juma' who after his own diagnosis gives medicine which consists of the roots, leaves or barks of wild plants and trees. The knowledge

is kept as a secret because the practitioner thinks his medicines will be fruitless if secrecy about it is divulged to anybody else. Mak-kam Ima (48) of village Sikapah told the author that he learnt the art from his father when he was a boy. It is transmitted from one generation to the next in this way. He said he would teach his son when he grows up. The knowledge is not transmitted to either wife or daughter or any outsider. He said he also blows out the disease by divination which is known as "Uditan". All the diseases, which he cures, do not need the system of "blowing out". He applies this only when it is necessary. Some common diseases that are found among the Kayas are detailed below. This information was collected from Mak-kam Ima of village Sikapah who happens to be a specialized practitioner in medicine.

1. Dur (burning sensation on legs).—The disease is blown out by divination with the help of a sweepstick around. No medicine is given.

2. Tula (Swelling of foot).—No medicine is given. The disease is blown out by the wadde with the help of Kasek' chhon chum.

3. Dui-pareh. (It is another type of Dur with a biting sensation inside the leg). The patient suffers from sleeplessness and diarrhoea.—Herbal medicine from jungle is given.

4. Edek. (Fever with shivering and a high temperature on the body). Medicine procured from the jungle is given.

5. Kank. (Burning sensation on the body). Herbs from the jungle are given. The Medicineman blows out the disease by way of divination. Medicine is taken twice daily for one and half days. The disease is cured within three days.

6. Paka (Swelling of body). Medicine from jungle is given to the patient which is a strong purgative by which swelling comes down gradually. Three doses are given. The medicine is mixed with powdered rice added to small quantity of hot water.

7. Talamo (Headache). Herbs from the jungle. If patient requests blowing out, it is done by the medicine man.

8. Poinamdena or main. Colic pain. Herbs from jungle.

9. Orgoba. Aching of one side of the forehead. A nose drop prepared from the juice of some wild plant leaf is applied once and it is cured.

10. Natar Pata. Blood dysentery. Medicine from jungle is given two times.

information on the plants or leaves used for a particular type of disease could not be collected as the informant was unwilling to disclose the secret.

After much persuasion he agreed to the proposal under certain conditions. The conditions were that the author should observe certain restrictions and should not divulge the secret to anybody. There are a few other diseases which the Koyas described to the author. These are detailed below.

- 1 'Mass Nopu' This the common koyas disease i.e., the yaws.
- 2 'Neter dogg' (T. B.) Blood cough. The Koyas fear this disease most. 'Neter blood dogg' (cough).
- 3 'Rempa dogg' Cold and cough.
- 4 'Perna Pandia' Eyes, body and stool look like Kamaka or turmeric Jaundice.
- 5 'Pandanad' The Koyas say that their children when affected by this, become reduced to skeleton day by day till they die or recover when proper steps are taken.
- 6 'Param nopu' The Koyas say that a person affected by this disease feels acute pain while passing urine which looks like pus.
- 7 'Pidanganad' or 'Jivatinad' This is a disease

which acts like eating the 'Jiva' which means soul. When a person is affected in this disease he always gasps and the disease takes out the soul from within the body of the Koyas. Tindaned in Koyas means eating.

- 8 'Uhtam' Blood discharge in urine.
- 9 'Edmodit' Urine looks like 'Kamaka' or turmeric water and is discharged frequently.
- 10 'Kid nupu' A person affected by this the Koyas say, gets reduced day by day till the bones become prominent without any flesh in the body.
- 11 'Gaff' Itches.
- 12 'Alkanad Gaff' Rings-orn.

Most of the Koyas suffer from these two last mentioned diseases. They show great interest in using charms which are offered by any outsider. They will immediately make a crowd if they hear that somebody is distributing medicine. Skin diseases are mainly due to their uncleanly habits which are seen much less among the Koyas of the southern part.

There are few other diseases like 'Amatol' or 'Yoyotostinat' 'Dutoma' and 'Sotal gaga' which constitute a different group so far as the nature of their treatment, by the Koyas is concerned. 'Yoyotostinat' or 'Amatoll' believed to be

goddess of smallpox and 'Detama is the goddess of chicken pox and Sudetyyo or small goddess is the goddess of measles. Persons affected by these diseases are exclusively treated by the 'Perma' or the priest of the village who makes offerings to pacify the respective goddesses. The diseased persons are kept aloof from other members of their family till they recover. Certain taboos are also observed in the village. Feasting of drums, whistles and dancing and singing by the womenfolk are completely tabooed during this period. The Koyas believe that if the taboo is violated the goddess becomes angry and severely attacks the villagers on a large scale.

The Koyas have another way for dealing with the wounds caused either by accident or attack of Jigra bears and leopards. These are thought to be the direct attack of malevolent spirits who make an aggression against the persons who either careless-ly trespass them or have not made sacrificial offerings to pacify them. The patients are

treated by 'Wadda' (Gurda) who makes "Wallam Leditan" or finds out the particular cause of such accidents by way of divination and makes offerings to pacify the spirit or god causing the wound. Some times more than one Gurdas are found engaged to cure the patient.

The Koyas have a local reputation for skill in curing severetypes of wounds, cuts or fractures with the help of their knowledge of medicine made from wild roots and herbs. This is not totally untrue. The author has seen a person in the village 'Nikapali' who was badly attacked by a bear and the wound on the legs were of so severe a nature that the author advised them to take him to Malkangiri hospital, for medical treatment, to save the patient. This was not accepted and the father of the patient took the help of the gurda. After few months when the author visited the village the former patient was seen running after cows and was as good as any man except for certain scar marks on his leg.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND THE QUEST FOR FOOD

The type of economy that the Koyas practice cannot be strictly classified as agriculture though agriculture at present is the major productive occupation of the Koyas. Information from the older genera. Bon and old records of the Taluk reveal that the Koyas of Malkangiri region were originally shifting cultivators. Little or no effort, in the past, was made for practising wet cultivation as large tracts of virgin forest cover, were available for shifting cultivation. With the passage of time their economic activities have been influenced by the changes caused by innumerable factors. The increase in population due to migration and birth had an obvious effect in minimising the individual share of the natural resources. Besides, Government agencies have made every effort in the direction of stopping the practice of shifting cultivation which was responsible for the evil effects like deforestation, soil erosion and a colossal wastage of forest wealth. Forests have now been declared as reserved ones. All these factors have led the Koyas to depend on the practice of shifting cultivation in a very limited way and have forced them to practice wet cultivation, a system/practice wet cultivation, a system, with which they were completely unfamiliar. The method of culti-

vation, as practised by them, is very crude. They lack the knowledge and the comparatively elaborate technology essential for the purpose of practising wet cultivation. As a result, the yield from the field becomes inadequate for an average family, in spite of the fact that the amount of land owned by that family is in no way less than that of similar families in other regions of Orissa.

The inadequate yield from the type of wet cultivation done by the Koyas does not suffice for a family. There are other types of economic pursuits which the Koyas take up. One of them is the slash and burn type of cultivation or the shifting cultivation of which detailed description will be given later. Another type of pursuit is the collection of roots, tubers and fruits from the forests in large quantities which save them, as they say, at the time of scarcity. For meat they depend on the wild games and the Koyas are expert hunters. The cows and the bullocks also provide the Koyas with quantities of beef which they eat.

The other economic activities of the Koyas are directed towards getting a shelter and clothing. The techniques to deal with these problems are simple. The materials

needed for the construction of a house are available from the nearby forests, and these are collected by them and as the structure of the house of a Koya is not very elaborate. The construction is sometimes done by the members of an individual family by themselves, or if help of some others is required 'Landa' or rice beer and pork or fowl is provided as a remuneration for the help.

For clothing the Koyas used to sell their cows or bullocks for cash. Though practice is still in vogue it is gradually diminishing because of the emergence of the new markets in their country. There the Koyas sell their crops or vegetables and the money is spent in purchasing clothing for all the family members.

From the above facts it becomes obvious that the economic activities of the Koyas centre mainly round the satisfaction of their primary needs like food, shelter and clothing. Their simple technology has not enabled them to exploit fully the resources at their disposal.

The emergence of markets and the primary dependence on wet cultivation are certain to bring about great changes in their economic activities. A systematic study on the subject has yet to be made.

THE SYSTEM OF LAND TENURE

The Koyas distinguish between three main types of land used for different types of cultivation. Firstly the low land which can hold water for a considerable period in a year is called "Barbar

Kate". Secondly, the land which is situated on a comparatively higher level and where water can be stored by making small earthen dams on all sides is called "Uak Beda". The third type is known as "Eiku" or the slopes where water cannot be stored and is full of trees and bushes. These are the sites where shifting cultivation is practised.

The Koyas do not always possess sufficient amount of "Barbar Kate" or lowlying land suitable for wet cultivation because of the dearth of such land due to various reasons. It has been mentioned elsewhere that the region inhabited by the Koyas is full of thick reserved forests and the land is mostly undulating. Hence, lowlying land for wet cultivation is extremely limited.

When a new settler comes to a village he has to meet the Peda' or the headman with a pot of 'Yando' or rice beer as Sheti. This is because the headman of village was granted 'Mustafadri' or the right to collect cess from the villagers by the Raja of Jaypore as Malkangiri subdivision was a part of his estate. The headman was asked to deposit a fixed amount either in cash or kind in the treasury of the Raja and this practice was being continued till recently, when these were deposited into Government treasury at Malkangiri. The headman was authorised to dispose of any part of the individual holdings in favour of a new-comer to the village. Assessment of rent was the exclusive right of the headman. Assessment never exceeded the amount of rupees five in cash and



one 'Puli' or 120 lbs. of paddy for each plough used in a single family. The amount of land owned by an individual family depended on its capacity to bring land under cultivation. This was of course applicable to the first settlers in a village as there is a limit to the availability of cultivable land in a village which is demarcated by the Government, at present.

The amount of land possessed by individual families could not be exactly known as no survey in this region was made until recently. Original settlement with a regular survey of land was made by a year back which was also not complete by the time when the author was undertaking field work in the Koya area. When a Koya was asked as to how much land he possessed the answer was three ploughs, or four ploughs as the case were. This was according to the prevalent method of assessing rent on the basis of the number of ploughs used by each family.

It was found after enquiry that the Koyas show a great craving for 'Elibar' or the village forests where they are allowed by Government agencies to practice slash and burn or shifting cultivation. As this practice is being sharply restricted by the Government and as this type of land is extremely limited, the late comers to a village cannot get such land solely and depend on wet cultivation. This fact was corroborated from the new settlement records of a village named 'Sikapalli' where preliminary survey was almost complete. Out of forty families twenty nine possessed the 'Elibar' and eleven went without

them and obviously, these eleven families were late settlers in the village.

Now-a-days the Koyas of Malhangiri grumble against the Government policy of rehabilitating the Dandakaranya refugees in these areas as this region is included in the Dandakaranya area. The main reason for their complaint is that if the Government implement the scheme of rehabilitation in their region the extent of their use of village forests will still further be limited and they will lose the source of fodder for their cattle.

Method of Cultivation & the Agricultural Implements

The Koya agricultural implements consist of spade (Gedadi), axe (Godel) and plough (Nangal). The ploughs are of a rudimentary form and the Koyas make these by themselves. The axe and spade are procured from the Kamar Koyas who happen to be an occupational group among the Koyas. In these days, due to the emergence of markets in this area, the Koyas procure the agricultural implements like axe, spade and hoe from the Oriya Kamarias who regularly visit these markets. The sickle used by the Koyas has no saw like teeth for the smooth cutting of corn. This is also the type of sickle used by the local Hindu people. The use of crude and simple types of agricultural implements may bear testimony to the fact of their ignorance of a developed type of cultivation method.

Measuring of corn fields is not done by the Koyas in spite of the fact that they have large herds of

cows and bullocks. All the dung is heaped in the kitchen garden and spread for growing tobacco, mustard and other vegetables. On enquiry they said that the best manure of which they know is the ashes of the burnt tree grass bushes. The implication is when they practiced shifting cultivation they were burning the patches of jungle which they cleared and seeds were sown on the ashes spread over it. As they were getting bumper crops they thought these ashes to be the best manure. In the paddy field the Koyas use the straw to dry after taking away the paddy by scraping it from the neck of the plant. The rest is left to dry up or be grazed by cattle and the Koyas also are not likely to believe that the ashes will serve as manure to yield a good harvest.

Cultivation of sand acorns with the break of the monsoon in mid June. Before that they do not till the soil to get the fields prepared for sowing. The men and women folk remain busy in ploughing the fields. Even girls above twelve years of age are also no exception. Sowing of seeds and ploughing are done simultaneously. After the field is ploughed once, no second ploughing is considered to be essential by the Koyas and the seeds are spread over it. The seeds are sometimes made to germinate before sowing. After sowing seed there is a short gap in the agricultural activities. When the plants grow to a certain height operation for storing water in the paddy fields begins. If a comparatively major earthen embankment is needed to store water in an individual's field, the owner invites the

villagers and the work is done on a co-operative basis. The man who is the employer does not pay cash or paddy as remuneration. He provides sufficient amount of food or rice beer, and kills a pig, distributes the pork among the villagers as remuneration for the work done for him.

After the starting of water in fields in over which is said to be one of the major agricultural activities the field is left till the crops begin to ripen. Weeding is never done by the Koyas. When a newcomer approaches a paddy field at the time of harvest he is perplexed to find the fields full of wild grass of which the Koyas always grumble saying "gatie" "gatie" meaning "much grass". In most cases weeds constitute more than half of the total number of plants that grow in a field.

When the crops begin to ripen the Koyas take precautionary measures to save them from the depredations of wild animals and birds. They have to keep a watchful eye constantly because during the day time the wild birds are a source of great trouble. All the boys beginning from the age of eight onwards in a family go to watch with the small bow and arrows. Sometimes groups of boys also go to hunt wild birds. The adult members go to sleep in the field where they have constructed small platforms which is known as "Kebal". Sometimes hutments over raised platforms made of bamboo are made to sleep in. While sleeping they blow "abham" (horn made of gullies and beat drums to drive away the predatory animals from

the paddy fields. This kind of watch continues from the month of Dashera till the end of the harvest of "Barhiya Wansi" or big paddy.

The Koya differentiates between the two types of paddy, i.e., the one which ripens earlier and the seed is of which is sown on comparatively higher land known as "lak brow" is called "Sodul Wansi" or small paddy. The other one which ripens later and is harvested much later than "Sodul wansi", and the seeds of which are sown in lowlying lands called "Barhiya Kote" where water remains for a considerable period, is called "Barhiya wansi" or big paddy. Some of the varieties of Barhiya wansi are Gudana Wansi, Mendho wansi, Maipah wansi, pashanda wansi, Gumel and Janderi wansi. The types of some small paddy or sodul wansi are Bodeada, Ratan chudi, Ded Chuk, Gangshark, kike polk and 4th wansi etc.

No sooner the "Sodul wansi" Gudana" or the harvest of small paddy begins in the month of November the Koyas are found busy day and night in their fields. This is a period when no body except the children and women and infants can be seen in the village. Sometimes a whole family is seen in the field house known as "Ketul". The "Ketul" is a raised earthen platform with no walls but a thatched roof supported by bamboo pillars on all corners. Creepers of pumpkin, gourd and bean are found spread over the roof. The surroundings of a field house are kept clean by clearing the bushes and grass.

Inside the house there is an oven where cooking is made and earthen pots for water and cooking are kept. From outside it looks like a house in miniature. At day break all the villagers go to their respective field houses and the women folk cook there for the day and help the menfolk in reaping paddy. Infants are also taken to the field house where they are put in a basket hung from the roof of the field house. Threshing of paddy goes on till evening and then all the family members return to their village. Sometimes food for night is also cooked in the field house and brought home where it is eaten.

By the time the harvest of Sodul wansi is over the "Barhiya wansi" gets ready to be harvested. Paddy is reaped from the neck of the plant and the root is left to dry up. The straw is not collected because the Koyas do not thatch their houses with straw. During harvest efforts are made to reap the corn as soon as possible to save it from the depredation of wild animals.

After the reaping is over the paddy is kept in a heap in a particular place cleared for this purpose known as "Koda" or "Kafan". This is situated near the field house also. Paddy is threshed in this place and collected in leaf baskets made of the leaves of the elephant Creeper (Shadi). The baskets are then carried home where they are stored in containers made of bamboo.

OTHER CROPS

Though paddy provides the staple food for Koyas in these days as a result of the practice of wet cultivation, it does not solve the problem

of food outright. No sooner the harvest begins the Koya perform the Nakhba or the 'Kodla Pandli' ceremony and start consuming the rice. Most Koyas can pull on for four to five months in a year with their stock of rice. This is the reason for which the Koyas make a very economical use of the store of their paddy. Cooked rice ("Chakur" or "Panda") is not eaten always for two times a day. In the morning a gruel is made of rice, and pulses mixed together and cooked rice is eaten at night. Some millet maize and dried mahul flowers are substituted for the morning gruel of rice. From all these it becomes obvious that they depend on growing other crops like millet maize and pulses as food crops. All the Koyas possess pieces of land either inside the village or very near the village where they can keep a constant watch over the plot of land. In the beginning of rains or just before it the Koyas redivide their plots of land either with split bamboo or wood felled by cutting trees. Here, they sow maize ("poi Jaba") and millet (Khad jaba) in the months of 'Pedana' and 'Bardabara' corresponding to the Oriya months from 'Jyestha' to 'Srabha'. They are harvested in the months of 'Dhawal' and 'Pandi' corresponding to the Oriya months from 'Mardh' to 'Pausa'.

A variety of pulses like *peal* (Phaseolus), *ka-katur* (*Phaseolus*), *peal* (*Phaseolus*) like "Nank" (Sesamum) and "Tangon" (mustard), beans like "Sikad" and "Jank" (*Vigna* *Tropica*) are sown in the fields or the sites where slash and burn type of cultivation is made.

A brief account collected from the villagers of Singsakh with regard to the system of shifting cultivation is given below.

Method of Shifting Cultivation

The sites for shifting cultivation are found situated above the lowlying lands that are used for wet cultivation. Landclearing and burning of the jungle starts in the month of Padmasanti; commencing to the latter half of April and first half of May, respectively. After harvest the sites selected for this purpose are cleared by felling trees. While clearing a patch certain trees are spared as they provide fruits to be consumed by the Koyas at the time of scarcity. They are *Jamb*, *Bengur*, *Mu* (*Banabotla*), *Korka* and *Kosa*, etc. As the operation of shifting cultivation demands much more labour than what an individual family possess an individual invites the number of persons he requires and every day he provides them with lands or rice beer for drink as till the cutting and clearing are over. The labour required for cutting an acre of land could not be measured accurately. Madhusen Dawa, one of the informants, said, he required the services of nine persons for two days to clear one of his sites and eight persons for 3 days for another patch of jungle. As the land which he cleared for the purpose could not be surveyed accurately, informants could not be had. But his indication of the sizes led the author to assume that he has cleared approximately one and half to two acres of land for purposes of shifting cultivation.

When the site is cleared the wood and branches are left to dry up. After a week, they are burnt. After burning, the site is left till it starts raining. The site is ploughed once, and when rain falls seeds are broadcast. Seeds of Gora (Ragi) *Kohle millet*, *Permi*, *Jumuk*, *Vigna*, *Typka*, *Tau* (a kind of *Arad*), *Sikud* bean, *Padi* (*Phaseolus*), *Rachihon*, *Nunk*, *Sesamum*, *Benda* etc.

The seeds of Gora (*Fleissia cornu*), *Permi*, *Cajanus Indicus*, *Kohle millet* are broadcast thickly whereas others are broadcast thinly. The sites are left till harvest of Gora, *Permi* and *Susu* are ready to be reaped in the month of October and November. At the time of harvest the sites which are situated a mile or so away from the village are watched during night and day to save damage of crops by predatory animals.

After one harvest is reaped, the *Puna elka* or the new patch of jungle becomes *puna elka* or old one. Next year also the same site is used for shifting cultivation but the yield is reduced to certain extent in the 2nd year. Then that particular site is abandoned for 3 to 4 years, when again it is cleared for shifting cultivation. As the site is freshly overgrown with trees and bushes the Koyas again call it "*Puna elka*" or the new site.

The yield from shifting cultivation was difficult to measure accurately as the Koyas start consuming the crops immediately after harvest. Besides they do not have

their own standard measure. Though they are getting used to the local standard measure very few can measure accurately. The local measure for corn is given below:

(1) <i>Gadha</i>	..	30 <i>Puta</i>
(1) <i>Padi</i>	...	30 <i>man</i>

One man is equivalent to 100 *tolas* which is approximately 4 lbs. An approximate measure of crops was made by the author while collecting information on the total yield from a piece of land used for shifting cultivation by an individual named *Madakam Dawa* 36. Several other villagers were also interviewed. But for precision the information of one individual is being dealt with here.

As mentioned above the sites are distinguished as *Puna elka* and *Pada elka*. *Madakam Dawa's* *Puna elka* yielded last year 1930: two *puta* of Gora, 3 *man* of *Jumuk*, 4 *man* of *Benda*, 10 *man* of *Permi* and five *puta* of *Kohle*. The total yield in pounds is 62 lbs. He cultivated $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land approximately. Another individual named *Madakam Panda* who cultivated an acre got a total yield of 2 *puta* Gora, 10 *man* of *Permi*, 2 *man* of *Jumuk*, 3 *man* of *Benda* and 3 *puta* of *Kohle*. The total yield in terms of pounds is 400 lbs. 15 *tola*.

Per acre yield for each crop is difficult to measure as intercropping is practised by the Koyas, and no specific portion of the land is used for any particular type of crop.

An attempt has been made to show per acre yield of the mixed crops on the basis of the above information which shows that per acre yield is about more than 200 lbs., and on enquiry it was found that the per acre yield varied from $\frac{1}{2}$ mds. to 6 mds.

The crops raised are mainly used as food. Ragi is used for making rice beer and gruel is made to be taken at the time of scarcity during rainy season. The headman of the village informed the author that previously they sold all other

crops except Ragi and beans in exchange for other necessities such as salt, tobacco and cloth. These days the children invariably eat *perut* and other pulses that are grown. But the previous practice is also a vague and excepting Ragi all pulses are sold.

A chart showing the seasonal activities of the Koya is given below. The Koya month is the period from one New moon to the next instead of the period from one full moon to the next as calculated in Oriya.

Koya	Oriya	
Pat	Pat-Bhag	Harvest of big paddy, <i>masa</i> (Red Jara), and Sasa collection of <i>Pir</i> , a jungle grass for thatching house, collection of bamboo from the jungle for the same purpose. Attending marriage feasts and dances. Hunting in jungle.
Bhag	Bhag-Patigun	Collection of <i>Pir</i> and bamboo; observe <i>asra</i> of <i>Bhusal Pandu</i> (Worshipping ceremony of rain god). Hunting in the forests and fishing from ponds and rivers.
Pagul	Pagun-Chaitra	Collection of <i>Mahu</i> and <i>Arada</i> and other fruits. Hunting in the jungle. Attending marriage feasts and dances.
Chait	Chaitra-Baisakha	Collection of <i>Mahu</i> . <i>Pawal</i> (Kandua, fishing from rivers and ponds)—Hunting in forests and attending marriage feasts and dances. Observance of <i>Ida</i> or <i>Ikk</i> . <i>Pandu</i> (New <i>Mahu</i> eating ceremony).
Saanti	Baisakh-Jyestha	Collection of <i>Mahu</i> and <i>Arada</i> and other seasonal fruits from the jungle. Observance of <i>Bija Pandu</i> is ceremonial hunting or <i>Bija</i> <i>asra</i> .
Padmasani	Jyestha-Asadha	Ploughing of fields and sowing ceremony or "Bija Wamand" (sowing of kitchen gardens and other gardens where maize etc. are sown). Clearing and burning of <i>Tila</i> or the land where <i>Ora</i> (<i>Glomera coracana</i>) and pulses, oil seeds and beans are sown. Sowing of the same and turn

Koya	Oriya	
Budabara	Audha-Sarabara	Sowing of paddy in rice fields and polders, Mandia, S. as in the Eda.
Mundhal	brabaa-Bhadary	Collection of roots and tubers from the jungle, storing of water in the fields whenever necessary and sowing of paddy.
Kari	Bhadra-Awra	Collection of roots and tubers from the jungle, observance of 'Karam Panda' or the new rice sowing ceremony, storing of water in the fields. Hunting in jungle.
Dahara	Awra-Kariki	Collection of roots and tubers from the jungle, watching birds and wild animals to save the crops to be harvested. Harvest of small paddy and observance of Kadia Panda or new rice sowing ceremony. Fishing from small rivulets and low lying land where water gets deposited. Storing of water in fields. Hunting in jungle.
Dawa	Karik-Bhaghar	Storing of water in the fields, fishing from small water deposits and collection of roots and tubers. Harvest of small paddy and observance of Sited Panda or the new rice sowing ceremony. Watching birds and wild animals to save crops.
Fad	Margala-Pa	Harvest of big paddy from the lowlying land and a later begin storing of paddy. Harvest of maize, suga and pulses and oil seeds begins, watching birds and wild animals in the field and work near the field house for collection and storing of paddy.

From a description of the seasonal activities of the Koya one fact stands out clearly that their economic pursuits mainly centre round their primary need of the quest for food and shelter. Hunting and collection of roots and tubers are regular features of their economic pursuit and throughout the year they are found in groups with their bows and arrows amidst the forest in search of wild games,

hares, birds, rats and squirrels. Considerable time is also seen devoted for collection of roots and tubers a detailed account of which will be dealt with later. Time devoted for wet cultivation seems to be very much less in comparison with other types of food quest. In fact they devote a great part of their time for watching and harvest of the ripening crops rather than the systematic effort for obtaining

a bumper crop. The marriage season of the Koya seems to begin with the end of harvest of crops when they become free to attend and perform marriage ceremonies in and out side their villages. The season ends with the first breaking of monsoon when they become busy with their agricultural activities.

The Cattle wealth of the Koya

The Koyas of Malkangiri Sub-division possess large herds of cows and bullocks and in the southern part of the Subdivision the number of cows and bullocks of a family increases and sometimes exceeds a hundred or more. Cattle herds of few villages collected are detailed below:

Name of the village	No. of families	Bullocks	Cows	Calves	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Gumpelonda	6	39	94	47	280
Tumbinadha	10	53	114	72	239
Oagrinadha	10	43	73	72	200
Maripala	12	38	139	77	254

The figures indicated are not of a representative sample but they indicate the quite large number of herds that are generally possessed by the Koyas. The cows and bullocks resemble the cows and bullocks that are found generally all over Orissa. The number of herds of such animals varies from one family to another in each village and the inequalities in possession is due to the natural calamities and epidemics that occasionally destroy their cattle. Grierson in his monograph 'Maria Gonds of Bastar' writes about the large number of buffaloes that are also owned by the so-called 'Black-horn Marias' of Bastar whom he

calls also Koyas. But it is interesting to note that nowhere in the Malkangiri subdivision the Koyas are found having buffaloes in their herds of domesticated animals.

The Koyas do not have Kraals or sheds as shelter for their cows and bullocks in their villages. The open space before or by the side of each house is used for tethering them on one long rope which is tied at one end to the trunk of a tree or a bamboo post that is stuck into the ground. Sometimes ten to twelve or more cows and bullocks are tethered on a single long rope. Throughout the year they are kept exposed to the weather. On

enquiry the Koyas informed the author that making large sheds for cows would demand much arduous labour for collecting building materials. As such they avoid doing it thinking this to be a heavy task for them.

The animals are driven to the forests nearby which provide good fodder to them. The forests are covered with many types of unidentified grass and creepers. They graze in the forest and drink water from the water source. No effort is made to feed them at home. A watch for them becomes essential only when the ripening crops are there in the fields. No sooner they are harvested the cows and bullocks are left to themselves for grazing in the fields and are only driven back by the Koyas in the evening. The villagers select watchmen in order of families who send their men in turn. Usually the boys of ages ten to fifteen go to watch the herds and in the rainy and harvest seasons adult person accompany the herds.

Castration of male calves is done at a much later period when they have already become grown up bulls. The Koyas say that if a calf is castrated earlier it will not have a strong and stout growth. They have their own indigenous method of castration. There are specialists who undertake this job. The testis of the bulls are crushed and made to pulp by constant grinding them with the help of two pieces of sticks and turmeric paste is plastered over the scrotum. In these days stockmen centres have been opened in these areas. But the author was told

by the stockmen that the Koyas seldom come to them for their help.

These animals suffer from disease for which the Koyas have their names. They are Yagotol (poor), Bakatol, Gora, Pataadaruk, etc. The Koya adopt the traditional way of dealing with these animal diseases. They ask for the help of their shamans who cure them by way of divination and use medicines of juices of the leaves and roots in the jungle. In this case also the Koyas do not ask for the help of the stockmen.

The Koyas seldom milk their cows. During rainy season when the fodder in the forests have a wild growth the Koyas milk their cows. They say that the calves will die if milking is done frequently. They prepare curd and butter but not ghee as others do. The ghee that is prepared unsystematically gives a bad odour. The Koyas say in the days of the reign of Jeypore king each headman was forced to supply few pots of ghee as 'bhef' during Dashera festival at Jeypore.

It remains for further investigation as to how and why this tribe possessed such a large number of cows and bullocks. The neighbouring tribes like Bondos, Khumias and Rangs of the same subdivision are devoid of such a possession. There is no doubt that the topography of the area is favourable for rearing herds of cows and bullocks. It may be noted that the possession of cows and bullocks serves as an important factor in the social economy of the Koyas.

The Koyas use both cows and bullocks for ploughing their fields. It was gathered that when the Koyas solely depended on shifting cultivation where ploughing of fields was of little importance, the cows and bullocks were made to tread over the patch of clearing after which seeds were sown, in that land. At present when they have taken resort to the wet cultivation, they have learnt to use ploughs to cultivate their fields. The use of cows in ploughing the types of tilling the soil and growing crops bear testimony to their lack of a developed knowledge about wet cultivation. From the list given in the beginning it is interesting to note that out of the total number of cows and bullocks in each village the number of cows exceed that of bullocks. The reason may be that the bullocks serve the purpose of a medium of exchange. They are sold either directly for ready cash or exchanged on the system of barter for any other necessity. The Koyas require money for purchasing their clothings and other necessities. The bullocks provide money to the Koyas. They do not sell the bullocks in the market. It is only when a customer comes to the village the Koyas sell them. The value of a bullock varies from an amount of rupees fifty to one hundred and rarely more if it is of big size. Direct barter of bullock for many commodities like fishing nets and rigs are also made. They wear a head dress of black horn in the ceremonial dances. These are thought to be a precious possession by the Koyas. They purchase black horses from the neighbouring people who some times demand a pair of bullocks

for a pair of black horses. The cows are never sold as the Koyas say that the cows will give birth to calves thereby increasing the amount of their possession of cows and bullocks.

In the social field these animals also play an important role. The possession of this wealth gives status to a man in the Koya society. In fact a man becomes wealthier in possessing a large herd of these animals. The man who does not possess any of these considered low in the social scale. No man can marry without possessing cows and bullocks because these are invariably included in the bride price that has to be paid to the bride's father. A man who has no cow or bullock has to serve under another man who might possess a large herd. In return from his service he is provided with a cow and a bullock to be paid as bride price. It was also gathered that when a man is without any animal of this kind he goes to one of his relations, residing in any village with a plot of lands or rice bearing field is provided with few heads of cattle to improve his occupation and then returns the same number to his benefactor after few years when he might have been able to possess more. This is a widely prevalent practice among the Koyas and a deeper study on this may reveal fact relating to the nature of indebtedness and the terms, conditions and the type of social obligations involved therein.

The Koyas were prolific beef eaters in the old days. In these days also the practice has not

completely been abandoned but they hesitate to reveal it to any outsider which they think will lower down their status in the social scale. The slaughter of cows and bullocks in the funerary ceremony is a regular feature in the Koya society. When a man dies all his kinsmen living in some other villages are invited to come to see the deadman. The dead body is preserved in the house, till all the kinsmen gather and in the mean while cows and pigs are slaughtered to provide the feast. When a man is erected in memory of the dead person a cow is slaughtered and its tail is hung on the stone slab.

In a nutshell the animal wealth of Koya gives status to a man, enables him to marry and is used as a capital whose productive function is of immense importance to the Koya. The Koya term for wealth is 'Chom' or 'Shom' and when a man is asked as to when he will marry, he replies saying that when he has got enough 'Chom' or wealth which originally meant cows and bullocks.

Other Domestic Animals

Pigs are domesticated in large number by the Koyas because pork is not only relished but constitute a regular feature in the dietary of the Koyas. In all types of ceremonial feasts pigs are slaughtered to provide pork for the feast. When a Koya employs certain numbers of persons to do some work for him a pig or two are killed for the feast.

Collection of Roots and Fruits

Collection of roots and fruits constitutes one of the important

factors in their quest for food. In fact a Koya substantially adds to his store of food through the collection of roots, tubers and fruits from the forest. The most important of these is the 'Mahul' or the flower of *Bacca latifolia* tree. The period for collection starts from the month of Phalgun to Baisakh about three months a year. The flowers being made to dry in late spring the Koyas go to collect them from morning after taking grain. Women and children take more initiative and return home with full baskets as these trees are found in abundance. It was found after enquiry that a family collected an average of three hundred pounds a year. After collection the flowers are dried in the sun to make them suitable for storing to be used in the scarcity period. Poor people, who apprehend shortage of rice and other foodgrains start consuming Mahul with some other forest-stuffs. Koyas are also found completely dependent on Mahul when all other food grains get exhausted.

Apart from serving as food Mahul also serves the purpose of an intoxicating drink. The Koyas prepare a kind of alcoholic beverage by boiling Mahul in their indigenous way. This beverage is called 'Suram' or 'Dram' and is deep red in colour. All the families prepare it and almost all the family members consume it. It is as common as the rice beer or lenda but due to the limited stock of Mahul all the families cannot afford to drink it throughout the year.

The Koyas also collect the fruit of this tree and prepare oil in an indigenous method. This oil is

very common among the Koyas who use it in their food as well as for toilet purposes.

Next in importance is the fruit called Tumari or Tumad. Kanda Kanda fruits are ripe also at the same time like Mahul. Huge quantity of these are collected, eaten and stored after being dried in sun to be used in times of scarcity. The dried Kanda fruits are made to soak in water and eaten. There are several other seasonal fruits which are collected and eaten but not stored. They are Nandia, Jamba, Etila (Kusum) and marksa mangot, etc.

Collection of roots and tubers from the forests is also important for the Koyas as they depend on these when their stock of produce gets exhausted. These are not stored but consumed immediately after they are collected. As the types are not available in any one season but in different seasons. Collection of roots begins from the corresponding three months of Jyestha and Ashadha Karmud Mats, Karmudam and Keshkumam are available during these months. Main is the Koya word for any type of edible root. From the month of Kani i.e. the Koya Bhadrab and Asovin months, Gondemati is available. This particular root or tuber is kept under flowing water for twenty-four hours after which it is washed and eaten. It is not eaten in this way it causes swelling of joints and pain all over the body. There are also stream and leaf doreppan which are collected by the Koyas. A systematic study and analysis of these roots and

tubers is apt to reveal facts that may be conducive for the betterment of health and hygiene of these people.

Various types of greens are also collected by the women folk from the edges of the standing water and creeks. These are eaten with green chutney are called Kusir. Seasonal greens are collected. Most important among these are Kewra kusir which is collected regularly when available and constitutes a common item of the Koya dietary during most parts of the year. Among others are cardsa kusir, card kusir, Tula-kusir, oval kusir, oval kusir etc. The Koyas also collect along with the eggs of the red ants to prepare curries with it.

Markets and the System of Exchange of the Koyas

There are very few markets in whole of the Koya country and they number four to five only. They are the markets at Malhangiri, Shapah, Mallavaram and Bejagwada. Besides there are certain other markets which do not act for the whole year. As communication to the Koya area is still poor merchants in large numbers cannot visit these markets. The market at Malhangiri is the biggest among those mentioned. Not because of the advantage in communication to the place as it happens to be the headquarters of Malhangiri Sub-division. The other markets are situated in the north of the Koya area whereas Bejagwada and Mallavaram are the southern most markets of that area. In the old

days, few Koyas attended the markets because of the distance they had to travel to the market. The distance between these markets exceeds twenty miles except in case of Malkangiri and Sikipath which lie at a distance of 10 miles from each other. Apart from the spatial dimension another factor has also to be taken into consideration. The Koyas have a limited number of needs or wants which they could satisfy without going to a market in a far-off place.

All these markets take place only once a week. In these days the Koyas are found attending the markets in an increasing number. People from villages at a distance of ten miles from a market also come to the markets regularly. Markets in the season after harvest are more crowded than in other season. New markets are emerging because of the growing interest of the Koyas to attend them in these days.

The Koya have a very limited number of needs. But these needs are of much importance to them. The most important among them is cloth for both men and women. The men who carry on this business come from Bastar in Madhya Pradesh and sometimes are the local Telugu people. Mainly the business men are people from Bastar. Muslims, Telugus and occasionally Oriyas with whom the Koya carry on transactions. The size of the markets is very small in comparison with the markets seen in other parts of Orissa. Some two hundred people approximately transacted business in a market. Both

men and women come to the market. The Koya women come for shopping as well as selling but the menfolk mainly come to purchase, not to sell.

The immediate needs of the Koyas are salt, cloth, oil, onion, dry fish and turmeric. Among these, salt and cloth are given top priority. Salt is purchased on a system of barter. Some times itinerant vendors come to sell salt in the Koya villages. The Koya exchange much salt and especially mustard for salt. On an unit of measure made of brass or iron of mustard is exchanged for 3 mans of salt. It varies from 2 to 3 mans of salt. In case of millet or rice one 'man' of rice or millet is exchanged for two or three mans of salt. Commodities like cloth, oil, dry fish and gudi are exchanged for money. The price of cloth varies from Rs. 4 to Rs. 10 according to the demand by the Koya. At the time of harvest the prices of cloth rise because the Koya need cloth for wearing on ceremonial occasions which begin after harvest.

The Koya women are seen mostly interested in purchasing different varieties of glass and metal bangles and necklaces of varieties of beads. These are sold by outsiders like Telugu women and Belpuri women who come from Andhra and Bastar in Madhya Pradesh. Apart from different types of ornaments the Koya women also purchase combs, mirrors, sweetmeats, soap which may be taken as articles of luxury for them. Lot of fancy articles are sold for which the Koya show little interest. But there is a

growing interest among the younger generation who take fancy in purchasing the hitherto things mentioned above.

Mention may be made of what the Koya bring to sell in the market. Mainly they are macho, Chilies, brinjals, bhadi, millet, Kouth, Rice, Tomato, Mung, Biri, and especially dried tobacco leaves. The vegetables are seasonal which the Koya grow in their gardens. All these are sold by Koya women. Vegetables and tobacco leaves are sold in particular amounts for one anna or two annas. Rice, macho, pulses and millet are sold in measures of man which are standardised and are some times not.

The Koyas do bargain at the time of purchase. But that does not benefit the Koya much as their counterparts are more intelligent and cunning. There were instances which were observed by the author where the Koya women fall an easy prey to their counterparts who take advantage of the simplicity and their ignorance of the measures and values of commodities. If a Koya woman knows that the price of macho is five annas a rupee she will not hesitate to dispose of her goods at the previous rate which goes to the advantage of their counterparts. Likewise they are cheated in many ways by the business men because man of Koya ignorance of measures in terms of money. This fact was corroborated by the statements given by the business men themselves in the markets of Shapali and Malavaram.

The Koyas go to markets more in number after harvest is over. They bring for sale commodities like rice, macho, maize, millet and pulses. The business men like Muslims and Telugas collect these at a cheaper rate from the Koya either in exchange of money or salt or cloth. These are again sold to the Koya at the period of scarcity when the Koyas again purchase these at a higher rate. This is one of the regular features of Koya transactions with outsiders. This indicates the lack of foresight regarding business transaction. They meet their need immediately after harvest by selling whatever they produce at a cheaper rate.

In spite of these short comings the Koya have by now been stimulated to produce commodities for sale in the markets. Emphasis is now being laid more on the garden produce which finds a ready market for the local people other than the Koya. Towards south of the Koya country where civilised Telugas and men from Madhya Pradesh have made a profound influence upon the Koyas, the money transactions are taking first place over the barter system. There is a class of people called 'Belparis' who have migrated to the Koya country from the adjoining Bastar State and have now become established in the Koya villages. The investigator found such people established in many villages. They also carry on business with the Koyas by providing them with the ceremonial dresses of the Koya magicians and head-dresses. These decorative dresses are purchased by the Koyas at a

very high rate sometimes costing more than forty rupees.

Markets are the place where the Koyas come in contact with the outsiders. The relationship is always commercial except with the 'Bajarias' who also take part in their social activities. The Koya are always dominated because of their docile nature. The market is also a place where the Koyas meet their relations living in distant villages.

Division of Labour and Craft Specialisation

Division of labour on the basis of age varies among the Koya

Small children up to age six or seven are not assigned any work. But as they grow older they take up the roles of adult men and women. When the boys are of the age twelve or more they do work like adult members. The girls of this age also do the household work like adult women. But hard work like ploughing, storing of water in the bund and going to jungle for hunting games are not done by the boys. As soon as they reach the adolescent period they work like adult members of their family.

Division of labour on the basis of sex is given below

Men

Women

Daily Duties—

(a) X Nil

(a) Bring water from the nearby spring.

(b) X

(b) Bring firewood from nearby jungle.

(c) X

(c) Sweep house and clean the surroundings of house.

(d) X

(d) Cook food

(e) X

(e) Make bed

(f) X

(f) Search for edible leaves and grasses.

Work in Gardens and Fields—

(a) Tree felling

(a) X

b) Fencing of garden

(b) X

(c) Ploughing

(c) Ploughing

(d) Sowing

(d) Sowing seeds

(e) Reaping

(e) Reaping

(f) Threshing paddy at 'kalana'

(f) Threshing paddy at home

Men

Women

- | | |
|---|--|
| (a) Gather fruits and roots | (a) Gather fruits and roots |
| (b) Preparing rice beer in huge quantity required for marriages and other ceremonies. | (b) Preparing of liquor from rice and Mahul. |
| (c) Storing of water in field | (c) X |

Hunting and Fishing—

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| (a) Hunting wild game in jungle | (a) X |
| (b) Fishing in rivers and streams | (b) X |
| (c) X | (c) Search for crabs, fishes from the water inside cornfields. |

Domestic Animals—

- | | |
|--|---|
| (a) X | (a) Attention to cows, pigs and goats. |
| (b) Taking cattle to jungle | (b) X |
| (c) Teathering cattle after return from jungle | (c) Teathering cattle after return from jungle. |
| (d) X | (d) Carry cowdung to the garden |

Building—

- | | |
|--|---|
| (a) Making houses, bringing wooden poles and bamboos erecting house thatching. | (a) X |
| (b) Treading mud for plastering | (b) Treading mud for plastering houses. |

Basketry and Mats—

- | | |
|--|-------|
| (a) Prepare all type of mats baskets and split bamboo. | (a) X |
|--|-------|

Wooden Utensils

- | | |
|--|-------|
| (a) Plough making | (a) X |
| (b) Wooden handles for spades and axe. | (b) X |
| (c) Crooms and frames for pots | (c) X |

Men

Women

Musical instruments and Weapons—

- | | |
|---|-------|
| (a) Prepare all kinds of musical instruments which they use, and bows and arrows. | (a) X |
|---|-------|

Personal Adornment—

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| (a) Feather and cloth dressing on human forms. | (a) X Varieties of hair dressing |
|--|----------------------------------|

Miscellaneous—

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| (a) Going to market | (a) Going to market |
| (b) Going to attend marriage | (b) X |
| (c) Milking the cows | (c) X |
| (d) X | (d) Preparing milk products like churning milk, etc. |

From the above table it is noticeable that the Koya women are more industrious and even share with their menfolk in difficult agricultural works except such hard work as tree felling and storing of water. What is more important is the fact that the women folk do not share those works where some technical knowledge is required. Basketry, fencing of gardens and preparation of musical instruments and weapons bear testimony to this fact.

There is an occupational group among the Koya. There is a particular group called Kamm Koya who specialise in making iron implements like axes, knives and arrow heads. They cannot intermarry with the other Koya people though they live in

the same villages. Though they do not live in a separate hamlet the superior Koya do not eat food in the home of a Kamm Koya. They are thought to be inferior in social status. For making iron implements they get remuneration from the villagers in kind like paddy and millets. Earthen pots are provided by the Kumbhara who inhabit the region. They bring pots to the markets for sale. These people are not Koya. Pots are exchanged in barter system and sometimes on payment of money.

Another occupational group of the Koya Tribe consists of the people called 'Musa'. The Musas are considered even lower in social status than the Kamm Koyas. The Kamm Koyas do not accept water-

from a Mund. Though they have the same clan and other cultural traits of the Koya tribe they cannot intermarry with the other groups of the Koya. They are an endogamous occupational division like the Kamar Koyas. They are not found in all the villages like Kamaras and remain scattered all over the Koya region. They are also very few in number. Their occupation is to make ornaments of brass and aluminium which the Koya women use. They are also paid in kind by their customers.

Koya Individualism

During enquiry about family holdings of land and other property it was found that the standard of living of the Koya varies from family to family in each village. Some families in a village are wealthier than others and there are people who are also poverty stricken. The latter lack sufficient land for cultivation and cows and bullocks as productive capital. Those who live at the subsistence level and those who are below subsistence level are forced to incur debts.

The Koya ordinarily does not like to speak out as to how much loan he has incurred from anybody. They are always suspicious about outsiders and hesitate to reveal anything concerning their property and wealth. After much difficulty the author was able to collect data about the nature and amount of debts that the Koyas have incurred. Villages like Silkapilly Kurumwada, Ponaru Maruwada, Kharibagada, Cherigada and

Marthelagada were visited and information was collected with the help of the village level worker.

The Koyas incur debts most often from among themselves and rarely from the Doms who call themselves Walmukh. The Doms reside in the same villages as Koyas, sporadically and occupy separate hamlets of their own. Their chief business is to advance loans to the Koyas when they are in need and collect the loan with heavy interest. Ten *Mans* of paddy is returned with an additional five *Mans* of paddy after a year. One villager of Silkapilly named Madham Dewa informed me that his father incurred a loan of one *pati* of paddy equivalent to 4 *Mans* approximately from the Dom of the village Kurumwada named Dwari Kanaya. He could not tell the year of taking the loan. After the death of his father ten years ago he is still repaying the loan. He has paid back one cow, one calf and twenty eight rupees and has yet to pay for three 'Gadkas' of paddy equivalent to 30 *Mans* of paddy which is due on him.

Credit transaction are also made between blood and affinal relations. But these are repaid without any interest. If there does not exist any type of relationship the debtor has to pay interest at the rate of half of the amount taken per annum.

From the instances gathered it was revealed that the Koyas incur debt mainly for maintaining livelihood to meet the expenditure on marriage ceremonies and funerary franks. Most of the instances referred to the need for maintaining

Bridalhood At the time of scarcity the Koyas go to the rich persons of their village or some other village to get loan either in cash or kind which is paid back soon after harvest is over. The Koyas have the practice of paying to the bride's father a pair of cattle consisting of one male calf and one female calf at the time of marriage besides he has to spend a lot of money and paddy including other domestic animals to provide for the marriage feast. He has to feed the bride's men who accompany her to the groom's village. For all these a man has to be ready with a substantial sum, failing which he can *Li, and joi*.

Otherwise, when a person's father or any of his family members dies he has to invite all types of his relations to see his dead body. He has to provide feasts for the villagers and Kinmen at the time of erecting a manhir. There are other social as well as economic obligations he has to fulfil for which he needs the means and if he lacks them, incurs debt.

Golf System among the Koyas

The system of employing 'Golf' (bond slave) is prevalent among the Koyas. The wealthier Koyas often employ them with a view to get help by way of manual labour. In village Shapadi and others, there are employed a number of servants of this nature. There are certain factors which lead the Koyas to serve as a Golf. The primary reason is to save oneself from poverty and the other is to get a bride. A man living barely on subsistence level can not afford to

get a bride by paying the customary amount of bride price and if he is to incur loan he has no means to repay the amount. In this case he serves a rich man not in his own village but outside it. The author has not found any instance of a man serving as a Golf in his own village. Out of several cases he lists some may be given here to show how circumstances sometimes force the Koyas to serve as 'Golf' under somebody. One Madkam Sukm (22) happens to be the Golf of the priest of the village Shapadi and his younger brother Madkam Jaga (12) is also employed as Golf in the house of the elder brother of the same priest named Madkam Binma (58) the two brothers went to Assam with their parents leaving their property with their maternal uncle to look after. When their father died at Assam their mother went away with another person marrying him. The two brothers returned to their village in Barak and found the property misappropriated completely by their maternal uncle. They could not be helped by their villagers and came in search of employment. On the way they begged and in the village Tondali a Koya employed them to clear a patch of jungle for him and as a remuneration paid them two mans of paddy. They came to village Shapadi next and an Oriya man from Malkangiri was asking them to go and work for him as his servants. The priest of the village Madkam Binma told them to stay with him and sent the younger brother to serve as his elder brother's house as golf. They preferred to stay in the house of Koya and not in the house of Oriya.

because they were assured that their wages would be paid in a lump sum at the time of their marriage.

Madham Surra informed me that when a Goli is employed he is assured by his employer to get him married to a Koya girl bearing all the expenses adjustable towards the remuneration of their service. When the employer gets a girl for his goli he is obliged to serve for another five years after which he is free to move to any place or put up separately building a house for him in the same village. If the girl wants to go away before the stipulated period he has to pay some amount of paddy and other things like a cow or a pig in lieu of compensation to his employer.

The Koyas also employ goli who ultimately become the 'La-am' or the 'ghar-jwan'. If a man has a daughter or sister he keeps a goli who is a poor man and not able to pay the bride-price. He is assured to get the girl if he serves the girl's father or brother for five years. This may be taken as a form of marriage by service.

The relation between the employer and the employed is like the relation between two family members. They are never treated differently. They work together and eat together. They have access to all places in the house. The servants also adopt certain terms of address to their employers on the basis of the clan to which he belongs. If he belongs to the same clan he calls his employer as uncle or brother as the case may be or if he belongs to any other clan he

calls either 'mama' or any term for affinal relations that may fit the case.

Habits of Food and Drink

The food of Koya constitutes a wide variety. A brief description is given below.

1. *Paddy*.—Paddy is husked and the rice from it is boiled and gruel is made. The Koyas mostly eat 'Jawa' or gruel instead of rice as eaten by others.

2. *Pulses*.—Pulses like, Biri, Pashli, Mung are also mixed with rice and gruel is made.

3. *Susa and maize and Mandia* are also cooked and gruel is made.

4. The vegetables like pumpkin, ground Kerasa, eggplant are eaten as curry with Jawa (gruel) or Chakur. Pancha, an oil cake or parched rice is delicacy for the Koyas. During the harvest season or just after harvest when the Koyas have plenty of paddy at their disposal they take Chakur or parched rice two times daily. At all other times parched rice is only eaten once in the evening and gruel of rice in the day time.

5. *Tdu' or 'Yhi' (manu)* is fried with little oil extracted from the dried seeds of the fruit of Mahul called 'du Koya'. This provides a substantial food to the Koya during scarcity seasons which method which is called 'Seram' or 'Tudel want' or small paddy.

6. *Tundul (Kenda fruit)*. These are collected in large quantities when they ripe and are stored after being dried in sun to be used during scarcity period.

7. The women folk collect a large variety of wild greens, 'Sag', which they call 'Kusir' from the forest jungles and the edges of the water which provide a curry to be eaten with *Assu* or choker.

8. Collection of roots from the jungle is another important source of food for the Koyas. A large variety of them are collected and boiled and eaten. The Koyas can live for a considerable period on the various roots collected from the jungle.

9. They eat the young green shoots of bamboo.

10. Fishes or 'Eles' are eaten by preparing curry in it. Various kinds of fish are dried and stored for future use.

11. Crabs, snails, tortoises are collected during rainy and other seasons and are eaten after being roasted in fire.

12. 'Along' or the large size red ant-eat full of eggs are relished by the Koyas. These eggs are grinded and paste is prepared and curry is made of it.

13. All types of wild animals and birds except tigers and bears are eaten without hesitation. Pigeons and fowls are domesticated in large number to provide meat.

14. The *Scolopendra*, wild rats and hares are also relished and are often hunted. A group of hunters will not hesitate to run for hours after a squirrel and ultimately shoot it down which is roasted and eaten by all.

The Koyas are voraciously addicted to different types of liquors. Liquor is not used as a luxury but a necessity without which, the Koyas say they cannot survive.

Traditionally it has ritual as well as social uses. No marriage or religious ceremony can be performed without liquor.

The most commonly used alcoholic beverage, is the '*Vanda*' or rice beer. This is prepared from the fermented rice and is drunk by all men, women and children. In marriage ceremonies, *Vanda* is the principal item which is served to the guests.

Ida Kaba or the liquor distilled from Mahul flower has a restricted use and all the Koyas can not afford to drink it very often. The Koyas also brew another kind of liquor from the Mahul by a special method which is called 'Saram' or 'Uram'. Saram is most commonly used by all the Koyas because of the abundance of Mahul trees in these areas.

Sago-palm juice is also drunk by the Koyas but the trees are rare which are individually possessed. The toddy-palm juice is also drunk by the Koyas. To the south of Malkajgiri taluk these trees are found in abundance and the Koyas can live for days together on this without taking food.

A new comer to the Koya area should be fully aware of the types food eaten by them. Detailed information with regard to the quality and quantity of each item of food may reveal the underlying causes of the typical type of diseases to which the Koyas are mostly susceptible. The wide variety of wild roots may be examined by experts. The Koyas say that there are roots which cause swelling of joints and pain if eaten improperly.

CHAPTER III

UNITS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Family

The family may be taken as the smallest unit of social grouping of the Koya society. A family is called 'lotom' in Koya language. It includes the parents and their children and in a way follows the Hindu joint family system by including the brothers with their wives and their respective children. In fact, a family consists of the parents, their adult sons with their wives and children and unmarried sons and daughters. Sometimes the farm also includes the tilaam or the ghar jatin who stays in his father-in-law's house with his wife. This is the form of marriage by service. As soon as the sons become adult and married they build up their own houses round the parent house to live separately with their wives but the cooking for the whole family is made in one place. If any of the adult son wants to be separated he asks his father to give him some land to live separated from the rest of the family. This process is gradually becoming common among the Koyas. Example may be given of Madkam Mase jata of the village Sakaipali who is staying with his two sons and the other two being completely separated from them and are putting up in their separate establishments. There are many other

instances which can be cited to show that the joint family system is gradually diminishing the causes of which should be studied elaborately.

Though monogamy is the rule, many Koya families are found based on the system of polygynous marriage. As the expenses of getting a bride is high the majority of the Koyas cannot afford to marry more than one wife. A wealthy Koya can afford to marry three to four wives. The head man of village Sakaipali has married three wives of whom one is dead and the other two are living. Madkam Rajja 36 son of headman has two wives. Madkam Dewa (38) who is also wealthy has married two wives one of whom died years back but the other is living. On enquiry it was found that polygynous marriage in the Koya society was possible for those who were economically better off than others. Usually two considerations are made by those who marry more than one wife. One is that they get sufficient economic help from the wives as womenfolk in the Koya society have their share in the pattern of economic activities of the Koya people. Secondly plural marriages are necessary to meet the sexual needs as in many

Since the wives are older in age than the husbands, and become old when the husband is still in possession of youth and vigour. Besides, a Koya feels himself a man of position and status by marrying more than one wife.

A man sleeps with all his wives in one room and sex relation with any one is not envied by others. All the unmarried girls above age ten go to sleep either with their grand parents or any other old woman of the village living alone. The boys above age ten also sleep in different places in groups or in a single group if accommodation is available.

As an economic unit the family functions for the maintenance of the livelihood of its members. All the members of a family co-operate in all types of economic activities, but due to the division of labour on the basis of sex certain types of work are done exclusively by one sex and certain other by the other which has already been described in the previous chapter. The functions of preserving cultural traditions are perpetuated from one generation to the other in co-operation with other people of the society.

The father is the central core of the family and all authority is vested in him. He directs other members in work and also works with them. He owns all their property of the family except a few owned by the female members. He is succeeded by his eldest son, by assuming the leadership of the family. He is the man through

whom descent is traced hence a Koya family is patrilineal. -

Regarding the female members of a family it can be said that wives assume a subordinate position to their husbands and the co-wives of a person remain peacefully with mutual adjustment with each other. But quarrels among them is not infrequent. The mothers train their daughters in work where as the father trains up his sons for work. When the father becomes old the eldest son assumes importance and virtually becomes the head of the family. Reports have been received that the sons beat their fathers when they become old in case the father ignores the authority of his eldest son but such cases are rare. Generally they are treated with affection and devotion.

Units of Kin group

The Koyas distinguish between two types of kin groups which they call as 'Kutawam' or the common patrilineal kin and the "widespread" or the affinal kin. There are five named phratries (Kutia) in the northern Koya society. They are (1) Kowal (2) Didi or sedl (3), Madkam, (4) Madl (5) Partum. The number of phratries are same among both the southern and northern Koyas. A Kowal can take a wife from any of the four remaining phratries other than his own. Similarly any person belonging to a particular phratry can choose a wife from the rest of the group. A person can not marry a girl of the same phratry to which he belongs because all persons in that

group are believed to have blood relationship with the person even though the person is not known to them and live widely apart from each other. As such when a man goes in search of a bride he is asked

as to which phratry or Katti he belongs to. This is because a phratry consists of a number of clans "Kattas" with different names, some of which are detailed below:

Edukatta Phratry	Kannal, Dubar, Enala, Wannala Kotta, Witter.
Aadukam Phratry	— Sadi, Wilka, Galla, Gompotalewar, Gangadikar, Dagatwar Phratwar.
Muthukatta Phratry	Madikam, Darwa, Madiam, Tal, Mistam, Dharmu, Ponder, Jondar, Joder, Undam, Kaimu, Taramu.
Parangotta Phratry	— Jellu, Oysteru, Madu, Daru, Pajiamdi, Panyam Bogar.
Perumbol Phratry	Ottar, Alwa, Bandam, Kurram, Padiam, Welir Kappa, Kappa, Kokral Kattam, Oodi, Rova Kottar.

The above information was collected from village Mullavaram and Mollu which is the region of southern Koyas.

Although the Koyas of Northern region give different names to their phratries the number of

phratries are same in both the regions and they also correspond to each other.

The respective clans of each phratry also similar although they vary in number. The following table will indicate the same.

Name of the Phratry	Corresponding name of the southern region	Clan names
1 Madikam	Muthukatta	— Kaimu, Madu, Dadi, Gunda, Gouda, Tal, Sadi, Bogam, Ponder, Galla, Telad.
2 Madu	Parangotta	— Panyam, Enala, Oyam, Pasteral.
3 Sadi	Aadukatta	— Odi, Wickalora.
4 Padiam	Perumbol	— Kappam, Katta, Welir, Raval, Kottam, Karish, Komat.
5 Kannal	Edukatta	— Kottu, Muthu, Padam, Wannu, Diu.

From the above names of the phratries given by the Koyas of both regions one thing becomes evident that the there are five main exogamous groups. Each group believes to have descended from a common ancestor and are identified with their respective totems. The totems for each group are:— Tortoise (Eruu), for Madham, goat (Maka), for Madi and Buffalo (yodh Bare') for adi padiam and Kowari. Each of the groups do not eat their respective totems.

The Koyas are not always able to name the different clans under each phratry. Besides there are many clan names which are of local origin and not found in other regions. This is evident from the informations received from Koyas of both the regions.

There are Wothada or mythological stories prevalent among the Koyas as to the Origin of their different phratries or groups. The name of the story is 'Dada Burka kawas'. The story goes like this— There was a great flood in which all beings died except a brother and sister. The name of the brother was Kawaas. Both of them created a guard (Burka) which floated over the enormous mass of water. At last they landed on an island and cultivated by the help of a Kasal a tool to dig earth, and produced Gera, Bagl, and other food grains and ate them. Since there was nobody else they married each other and seven sons and two daughters were born. The two daughters married the two eldest sons. Gradually the Koyas were born of these early unions.

The story is related differently in different places but one thing remains always that the brothers and sister married and gave birth to children who became the ancestors of their successive generations. These children became the founder of each phratry.

As the range of consanguinal and affinal kin is broad owing to the system of phratry grouping the people of which are scattered widely over the country, for all practical purposes the Koyas distinguish between the near and distant kinship relations called "Jegadi" or distant ones "The Basetadi" is nearer. Consanguinal kin group comprises of a person's relation on the father's side beginning from grandfather to Ego's own grandchildren. It also includes the brothers and their children. It does not include the sisters of his father. This consanguine kin group of a person have certain duties to perform in the social field. When a man is going to marry they bring pots of 'kanda' or rice beer as gift. In death ceremony all of them will bring a piece of cloth for the dead persons to be wrapped over the corpse. They are expected to come and attend at, those.

The affinal kin are people who are connected with a person through a marriage. Hence all persons on the mother's side related to a man in the way of being the affinal kin. The father's sister is also grouped in the affinal kin group as a person is eligible to marry the daughter of his father's sister.

The Koyas say that the affinal kin the "Wiwadwand" are more important in their society because

of their close contact with them. In all the villages people belonging to different phratries are found. This is because the people of the founder phratry always bring people of other phratries to find bride from among them or else they may find difficulty if the village is inhabited by people of a single phratry.

The kinship terms used for designating various types of kin in the Koya society is interesting to note because there are terms which indicate the type of behaviour that is to be shown to a particular man, called by a particular term. Some of the terms are detailed below :-

English		Koya
Father	..	Yamal
Father's father	..	Dada
Father's elder brother		Papa
Father's younger brother	..	Koba
Father's father's brother	..	Dada
Father's sister	..	Papa
Father's sister's daughter (Elder to ego)	..	Yatya
Elder brother	..	Dada
Younger brother	..	(No term of address) term of reference Tatank.
Mother's father	..	Tata or Akko
Mother's Elder brother	..	Mama
Mother's younger brother	..	
Mother's elder sister		Padi or Badiyaya
Mother's younger sister		Kadi or Sudiya
Mother's brother's son (Elder to Ego).	..	Bato
Mother's brother's son Younger to Ego		Er-and
Father's sister's son elder to Ego	..	Bato
Father's Sister's son younger to Ego.		Er-and
Elder sister	..	Badi
Younger sister	..	No term of address term of reference Eld.

Mother	Yaya
Father's mother	.. Nani or Yappi
Father's elder brother's wife	.. Babi's Yaya or Pati
Father's younger brother's wife	.. Badiyaya or Kasi
Father's father's Brother's wife
Father's sister's husband	.. Mami
Father's sister's daughter's husband (older to ego).
Father's sister's daughter's husband (younger to ego).	(No term) Paka
Elder brother's wife	Yangi
Younger brother's wife	Kodlar
Mother's mother	Baya or Kakka
Mother's elder brother's wife	Papi
Mother's elder sister's husband	Papi
Mother's younger sister's husband	Kaka or Baka
Mother's brother's son's wife older to ego	Bai
Mother's brother's son's wife younger to ego.	No term for address Peki
Father's sister's son's wife older to Ego.	Bai
Father's sister's son's wife younger to ego.	No term of address Piki
Elder Sister's husband	.. Bato
Younger sister's husband	Brud
Husband	.. (term of reference) Mitgal
Wife's younger sister	.. Enapki
Wife's elder sister	.. Poded
Wife's younger brother	.. Brud
Wife's elder brother	.. Bato
Wife's father	.. Mami
Wife	(Term of reference) Mami
Wife's younger sister's husband	.. Paka (term. of reference)
Wife's elder sister's husband
Wife's younger brother's wife	.. Piki (term of reference)
Wife's elder brother's wife	.. Baki
Wife's mother	Yaya

The above mentioned kinshipThe Koya System of Marriage

terms reveal facts as to how various types of kins are grouped together and called by single classificatory terms. For example the term 'matna' is used for three types of kins such as Mother's brother, father's sister's husband and wife's father. As a result of the system of cross cousin marriage where a person can marry a mother's brother's daughter and father's sister's daughter he is to show the same type of behaviour to these people as he should have shown in case of father-in-law. The term *pove* also indicate the thing. The term is also used for mother's brother's wife and father's sister and mother-in-law hence all these kins expect same type of behaviour from a person. Wife's elder brother, father's sister's son (elder to ego) and mother's brother's son (elder to ego) constitute a single group and all of their wives also constitute a single group by being given single classificatory terms for each group. There were others also in a similar way. Another fact is also revealed that parallel cousins form a single group and can not have marriage relations among themselves. Emphasis is laid on the patrilineal descent in all the male members on father's side have a kinship term for each which is absent in the case of all the male members on mother's side. This is evident also from the behaviour shown to a person's tertiary degree relations on both father's and mother's side. The son's children do not stand in joking relationship with their grand-father whereas daughter's children do stand in joking relationship.

Koya marriage or *Pendul* is one of the important social functions without which a man has no place in the society. For Koya marriage is a necessity because they have to perpetuate their generations and satisfy the sexual urge. Moreover the wife is an indispensable partner in all spheres of their life and from a study of the division of labour on the basis of sex it becomes evident that a Koya cannot do without a wife in the ordinary day to day life. The Koyas attach little or no importance to the physical beauty of a girl for marrying. The criterion for a coveted wife is her being healthy and capable of undertaking arduous labour in economics as well as social activities. The criterion for a good husband lies in the fact of his being able to support the family and having a large number of cows and bullocks, physically tall and healthy.

Freedom in the selection of a spouse is very much limited and it is only the parents who take active role for marriage negotiations. Where freedom is exercised by any girl or boy the form of marriage bears a different name. Free choice is interested but after a much complicated method concerning the payment of compensation which will be discussed later. The commonly practised form of marriage is known simply as *Pendul*. The system of marriage in which a boy carries off a girl with the help of his friends while she is in forest or field is known as '*Kame pendul*' or the marriage where compensation has to be paid to the bride's father. The other

form where a girl having previous connection with a boy comes to the boy's house to stay, is called "Lau ndi-ndi" marriage. In this case the bride-price which is to be paid to the bride's father is much less than that of other forms of marriage, because she enters the groom's house according to her own will and without the consent of her parents. In the case where a boy carries off a girl he has to obtain directly or indirectly the consent of the girl. Then he tells his father of his motive and if his father gives consent he brings down the girl to his house with the help of his friends. The bride's father demands compensation amounting to rupees three hundred, one she-calf for the girl's maternal uncle-chada, or cloth for the mother of the girl. Out of rupees three hundred, rupees eighty are given by the bride's father to his own villagers because they help him in realising the compensation from the other party. The villagers make a feast in it.

The age for marriage is fixed at the maturity of both the sexes. The 'yaa think a boy attains maturity when hair grows in his armpits and mustaches come up. I say 'yaa things happen when a boy is twelve to thirteen years of age. Hence the marriageable age for boys starts from the age of thirteen. For girls marriageable age begins when she has attained puberty, *stata* prospective of age. Hence the age of wives are found to be more than their husband. Many instances can be cited to show that the husbands are younger in age than wives. This is one of the important reasons as to why the

Koyas practice polygamy. Wives loose the urge for sex when their husbands are still youthful. But this is not always the case. The problem arises when a noble girl marries a bridegroom who has not actually attained maturity but is thought to have done so. This is because of the early development of sexual hairs. In this case the wife has to wait till her husband becomes fully grown up to perform sexual intercourse with her. She sleeps with her husband and is expected to remain chaste but in actuality it does not happen so. Rare instances are found of an adolescent boy marrying an infant bride in which case the boy has to wait till she is matured to come and stay with him.

The period of betrothal extends from one to two years and it is the parents of the boy who go in search of a bride. The father of the groom, go with his kinsmen and villagers, goes with a pot of mahul liquor to meet the bride's father and settle the marriage. If the bride's father agrees to the proposal he drinks the liquor with them or if he does not agree refuses to drink the liquor. The villagers and kinsmen of both the parties select the day for marriage which takes place always after the harvest is over.

Sexual intercourse is prohibited among relations belonging to same clan whether classificatory or real which is regarded as *Baŋga Tɔpɔ*, or big offence.

If any such thing occurs and looks out all the clan members of the culprits will sit for discussion and punish them with heavy fines.

It will be strictly confined to the members of that clan only. The system of preferential marriage is prevalent as indicated elsewhere. The first preference is given to mother's brother's daughter or father's sister's daughter. If no such candidate is available bride is found out from any other clan by duly compensating to the mother's brother or father's sister or of her groom.

The system of sororal polygamy is also practised by the Kayas who can marry the younger sisters of the wife one after another either after the death of the wife or while she is living. Widow marriage is also prevalent. A person can marry his elder brother's widow whom he calls "Yange". But marriage with the widow of younger brother is strictly prohibited as the stands in relation of daughter-in-law (Kadiar) of a person. Instances are also found of marriage by exchange of sister's. *Marramed gendul*.

Adultery on the part of wife results either in divorce of the wife and the person involved is demanded compensation by the husband. When the wife is divorced she is given a goat, one cloth, ten 'mans' of rice and rupees twelve. The Panchayat sits in the village and the girl's father is called and when the matter of divorce is decided the girl either goes to the man with whom she had connection or goes to her father if divorce is due on some other reason.

Marriage Ceremony

The period of marriage ceremony continues for three days. It begins by the ceremonial fetching of

water from the nearby water source by the 'yange' or the elder brother's wife. She is accompanied by a group of women to do this. They sing songs while bringing water. Singing is a regular feature and during the ceremony nothing goes without being accompanied by chorus songs sung by group of women relatives of the bride as well as groom. The water that is brought is called 'Pala-aru' or birth water. On the second day also the same bringing of water by the elder brother's wife continues. The groom sits on the lap of his elder brother's wife and unction and turmeric paste with one ghee is smeared on his body of the groom. Water is poured over him and he goes inside to wear new cloth. Then he is made to visit all other families in that village belonging to his own clan where he is bathed by the women folk. He visits these with the accompaniment of drums and if he is a rich man with the sounds made by shots of muskets loading guns. A few men are sent by the groom's father to the village of the bride to fetch her. These people go with invitation and stay there for the night.

Next day the bride comes to the village of the groom surrounded by a number of women her friends and goes on singing all the while. The groom's father sends pots of rice beer to the mud path before the bride's party reach to the groom's village. They drink the rice beer and take rest for a while and then again start. By this time the 'endbayul' or the dancing ground has already become crowded with hundreds of people both

male and female dancing. The men wear the 'jertha Kok' or the bison horn headress and garment which hangs from waist downwards. The womenfolk dance to the rhythm of the beating of drums. It is interesting to note that the villagers from a considerable distance come to dance in the marriage ceremony without being invited. They are given rice beer and 'Mabok' liquor to drink and some rice and pork for cooking. Each group cooks its food and eat before they depart. The Koyas say that they never go to dance in the marriage ceremony of a person whom they know to be not well-to-do. It is the courtesy and prestige of a person not to deny any group or individual to participate if they have come out of their own accord. Thus before performing the marriage ceremony a man must be fully prepared to bear any amount of expenditure that might be required. Sometimes people incur loss at the time of marriage ceremony to save themselves from humiliation.

When the bride's party enter the village they slow down their pace and make a halt at every five to six yards. The women around her go on singing. The bride is seen crying and she rests her head on somebody's shoulder. In this way they cover the distance to reach the groom's house. When they reach near the groom's house a regular struggle ensues between the bride's and groom's party. With much difficulty the girl is snatched away from the bride's escorts and the mother of the groom washes the feet of the bride and she is given a turmeric dot on her forehead. All the people eat

and drink rice beer in leaf cups. The couple then are brought before the house and water is poured over their head and they are made to wear new clothes. A spot by the side of a stream near the village boundary is selected for the performance of ritual. The bride goes to that place with the friends and relations of her village. The groom is then taken to that spot by his elder brother's wife. The groom and bride sit on the edge of their respective 'Yang' or elder brother's wives and eat. One of the cocks legs is eaten by the groom. He returns to his village to drink rice beer. The girl waits there till evening when she is brought and left in the groom's house. The bride sleeps with her people at the place selected in the groom's house. The bride's people drink rice beer known as 'Chakana lands'.

Next day in the morning 'Ana lands' sacred rice beer is given to the couple by the priest of the village. It is first drunk by the bride and next by the groom which is followed by group drinking rice beer. Till that period the bride is not expected to eat in the house of the groom. In the evening the elder brother's wife of the groom catches hold of the girl's hand and leaves her in the room which is known as 'Aan lon'. The couple spend the night there. After a week or so the couple visit the bride's parents house with a pot of 'lands'. One 'cock' and mabok liquor and spend few days and return back.

During the marriage ceremony several types of songs are sung by women folk of both the parties.

Each song has a specific purpose and is sung at a particular time. For example when the bride's people hand over the girl to the groom by joining their hands the friends of the girl sing very obscene verses by way of depreciating the physical features and attributes of groom. When the girl is snatched by the groom's party there is competition in singing songs. A systematic collection of songs will reveal more interesting facts about the customs of the Koyas. There is particular song for the girl when she is captured and carried away by a man to marry. The song is known as "Ammarranai put" or common away on the way. Though this has become a formal song it indicates the old custom of actually capturing a girl and carrying her away while the girl weeps and calls out for kinsmen to save her from the group of men.

Child Training and Education

The Koyas are not able to understand the physiological phenomena of birth and the correlation between sexual intercourse and conception. When a woman conceived it is thought that god has put the child inside the mother's womb. A pregnant woman carries on her routine work till the expected month of delivery when she is

taken to a hut erected behind the main house. Six to seven days after delivery she returns to her house.

Naming ceremony is performed few days after the birth of the child. It is interesting to note that the names of the Koyas are very much limited in number and in a small village several people are found, bearing the same name. This may be due to the way in which names are given. A child is put in cradle and some rice is put into the closed palms of the child. The shaman goes on telling names that surface to his mind. When the baby opens the palms and rice is thrown down the name uttered by the shaman at that particular time is given to the baby. Sometimes the practice differs. The shaman makes the baby cry while it is in the cradle. The shaman goes on telling the names. When the baby sleeps and stops crying the name uttered at that time is given to the baby. The Koyas have a belief in the reincarnation of life. A person is supposed to be reborn as his son's son. As such the names of the grand-father are given being to the grandsons.

The Koyas divide the period from the birth of a child to the end of weaning period into seven stages.

They are— 1. *Ukha Uzio* (The period of sleeping in cradle)

2. *Kaprandia* (Rolling from one side to the other)

3. *Kudgattia* (To crawl in a sitting position)

4. *Murukidan* (To crawl on all four)

5. *Tiga Dader* (To walk with the help of a bamboo made frame)

6. *Gunda Gunda nika* (Little walking)

7. *Gari Milla* (Running fast)

When a child reaches the last mentioned stage he leaves suckling his mother's breast and learns to speak and is helped by the mother to know names of things. Till seven years of age the mother takes the entire responsibility of a child by way of caretaking. Till the end of the weaning period a child is treated with kindness and after that period he is lightly coerced if his impulses are found unruly. Fathers generally do not beat their daughters when they are above the age of twelve. Mothers generally do not beat their sons when they are above the age of twelve. The boys and girls are expected to behave properly even before they reach the stage of maturity.

Till the age of six neither boys or girls use any cloth to cover their genitals but soon after that mother teaches both boys and girls the way of wearing 'Chir' under loin covering the genitals. When the

girls reach the age of nine or ten they know wearing of "Chir" under, the way in which women folk wear their clothes. The boys wear loin cloths the way in which the men folk wear their clothes. The Koya boys learn their traditional knowledge of making bows and arrows and other things early even before they are adolescents. They prepare miniature bows and arrows for and play with them. A group of boys play the 'Junkarator' game by aiming at a particular target. Either they divide themselves into two groups or two boys play at a time. When a boy misses an aim the arrow is taken away by the winner. It is interesting to note that small boys, of even ten years possess the power of accurately aiming at a particular spot. As a matter of fact the boys in a group go for hunting small birds, bring them if they happen to find any, and eat after roasting them in fire.



CHAPTER IV

LEADERSHIP & RELIGION

The Feda or Headman

Leadership, both political and social revolves round the headman of each village. Until recently, as mentioned elsewhere, he had certain economic prerogatives which made him virtually all powerful in a village. Even in religious matters he is the first man to take initiative to ask the priests and villagers to perform religious ceremonies on various occasions.

Usually the office of headman is hereditary. After the death of a headman his eldest son becomes the headman of the village, but this is subject to certain conditions. Certain stipulates must be fulfilled by the new headman. He must be a good and impartial man. He must be able to voice the difficulties of the villagers before any Government official that visits their village. He must be wise in making decision in case of various types of disputes. In these days the headman is expected to know little Oriya so as to be able to converse with Oriya Officers and tradesmen. In every Koya village the headman are found to be wealthier than others. He may not be the wealthiest man, but wealth and riches are always factors for enabling a man to become the

headman. Although the office of headman is succeeded by the eldest son this principle is not always adhered to. If the eldest son does not satisfy the conditions mentioned above preference is given to the next son if he is found capable. It was also gathered that if the headman has no son to succeed him preference is then given to his brother's son. In the absence of any of such relations the priest of the village is selected for succeeding the headman in addition to his office of religious leadership of the village.

The headman of each village takes decision with regard to disputes that arise within that village. He asks for the elders of the village to surround him and both parties involved in a quarrel sit before the headman each occupying a side. Headman also sits in the Kula Panchayat of particular clan, even though he does not belong to that clan. In a Kula Panchayat members of that Kula or clan can only sit and discuss about a disputed matter concerning an incest. By virtue of being the headman of that village he is asked to decide any dispute that arises within his own village.

The decision made by the headman of a village is never challenged. No instance could be gathered with regard to a headman who has ever been unjust and unpopular. If a headman becomes unpopular due to some reason the villagers sit together and select another man. It is reported somewhere that the people of a village sit together once a year to discuss about the headman's activities. The headman sits listening to what the people discuss. If he is abused or depressed for some reason he tries to work it himself accordingly. This occasion is known as 'Pedu Gudam'. In village Matiarum the author was told that in their area when a new headman is selected a ceremonial function in this connection is performed by the villagers. A new cloth is wrapped on his head like a turban by the priest of the village and he is taken to the village godman to swear to remain just and good.

Apart from the village as a political unit there is another wider unit which is known as Mutha Panchayat. A Mutha Panchayat consists of members who are headmen of different villages of a particular area. It consists of five headmen of five villages. The Mutha Panchayat controls a number of villages of that region with regards to disputes of serious nature which involve persons of several villages. The members of the Mutha Panchayat are selected by all the headmen of a particular region. Mutha Panchayat mainly deals with cases like taking away of another's wife by somebody which is considered as 'Barhiya tapu' or big crime. The aggrieved

person asks the headman of his village to call for the Mutha Panchayat to get the compensation from the accused person. Crimes like witchcraft and sorcery are also dealt with by the Mutha Panchayat. If it happens to involve persons belonging to more than one village:

Priest or Priest

Next to headman the priest of a village who is called 'Puma or Pujari' assumes immense importance as a leader of Koya society. Although his functions are mainly religious the Koyas have a great regard for this leader. He is believed to have power of communication with the supernatural beings and as such, he acts as an intermediary between the human beings and the unseen powers. The Koyas like the other primitive people mostly depend upon their religious rituals to get relief from the natural calamities which are believed to be caused by angry gods who need to be propitiated. A bumper crop or a successful hunt is thought to be due to the blessings of their gods. Hence they constantly remain concerned with the supernatural beings with regard to a proper and their way of life. The priest, as such, is the person who is to attend to all the needs of the supernatural beings by way of worshipping or propitiating them with the help of his villagers.

The office of the priest in a village is usually hereditary. In case the priest dies without leaving an heir, a son of his brother is looked for assuming the post.

Before becoming a priest a person has to undergo a series of initiation rituals and is asked to observe sexual continence. He then is given with the teaching by another priest of some other village in case his father is dead. During religious festival like Bijja Pando, Markapanda and Tripanda, etc. he observes strictly the religious rituals. The night before the festival day, he observes sexual continence and never eats food cooked by a female. He has to fast till worship is over and he is the first man to eat after offering to god is over. He is invited to eat new fruits or drink the liquor first by the villagers before they enjoy the new fruits or drinking and by doing so they think the gods will remain pleased upon them.

Apart from his religious duties he also attends the meetings of Kage Panchayats and always have a say with regard to any type of dispute. He is, of course, treated as one of the village elders in these cases. At the time of the sprout of small pox which is believed by the Koyas to be the goddess, the priest gives orders to the villagers to observe certain taboos.

'Waddi' or Magician

The waddi is a magician who occupies equally important position in Koya society like the head man and priest. A man becomes waddi not because he is the son of a magician or selected by the villagers but because he is supernaturally endowed with the qualities necessary to become a magician. After the birth of a child if 'Talei' or matted hair is observed

on the head of the child he is destined to become a magician in Koya society. From his childhood he is kept under the special care of his parents and certain taboos are observed with regard to his food habits. From his boyhood he is kept under the training of an adult magician who teaches him the ways of doing his duties as a magician.

Like the priest he also possesses power to communicate with the supernatural beings. He differs from the priest by being capable of moulding and keeping under control the supernatural beings to achieve success in his designs. He can take the help of malevolent spirits to cause harm to anybody he hates and as such, he is dreaded by the Koyas. On the other hand he is able to drive away the malevolent spirits with the help of his magic who cause harm to the Koyas in various ways. It is a very common affair in the Koya area to find the magicians chanting magical formula before patients of various types. As a matter of fact most of the diseases are believed by the Koyas to be caused by spirits or angry gods. The Koyas run to the magicians for immediate help in dealing with such troubles.

As a member of society he enjoys equal rights with other Koyas in a village. He can marry and lead a life like other in the village in accordance with the social rules and regulations. The Koyas usually bear an ambivalent attitude towards him. He is liked as well as dreaded and as such hated. But his services are believed by the Koyas to be indispensable.

The Khatwal

The Khatwal is usually considered to be just a useful because he helps the headman in adjusting things in his work. The headman calls on him to go to a meeting of the villagers, or to be held at the time of religious festivals in a village. The Khatwal goes round the village to call the villagers together because he has much to discuss the work to be done, community, etc. In matters of inter-village quarrels the Khatwal is sent to other villages as a messenger. When a woman is pregnant in a Khatwal village a headman makes arrangements for the girl with the help of Khatwal in this way the services of Khatwal are thought to be useful. In the Khatwal Apart from this he also receives a prize without her as a member of the society.

Settlement of Disputes

Settlement of all disputes arising within a village is usually made by the village Panchayat which consists of the village elders and the headman with other leaders. Men, liond castes, or case of interest where a caste are not involved the Khatwal Chapter choosing of members from the concerned castes with the headman and the name at stake. Where particular case involves persons of several villages the matter is referred to the Mutha Panchayat the members of which are selected by all the headmen of a particular region constituting the Mutha. This is also true of the Kovas of Southern region of Melkangiri subdivision.

Mutha Panchayat deals with cases of breach of marriage regulation. In case of elopement the aggrieved

husband brings the matter before the Mutha Panchayat. The members of the Mutha Panchayat select a day for deciding the case. Two Khatwals of two villages are sent to bring the culprit who took away the wife of another. On arrival the culprit he is asked to return the wife of the aggrieved husband. If he denies he is compelled to pay the compensation to the aggrieved husband. Rapes three hundred rupees, a usually demanded for such an offence out of which rupees 100 are given to the aggrieved person and the rest money is distributed among the members of Mutha Panchayat. Apart from the fine the culprit is also demanded with one cow, one pig one oil, one tree and some amount of salt by the aggrieved person which he has to pay. At the end both the parties have to give a feast to the Panchayat members for which five 'mans' of rice and one goat is arranged by both the parties. When the case is over all present in the Panchayat including the parties concerned gather near a water source. Meal is cooked and distributed equally to all.

All other cases like adultery, rape, witchcraft and divorce are usually decided by the village Panchayat and when they involve persons of different villages the headmen of such villages including the elders of respective villages sit together and decide the case. One case of divorce was decided by the author when it was being decided at village Solapuri. The parties belonged to village Palkonda Betu Vake. It wanted a divorce her husband Betu Jaga of same village due to family quarrels.

The case is first parents known in the upper village and did not return to his parents. Both Jaga brought the matter before the Panchayat for settlement of which a Madham Banna headman of village Nhapalle the father of the girl came as the supporter of her daughter and the brother of Banna as the supporter of Jaga. A compromise was suggested and was decided by the Panchayat members. It was the father of his girl who gave compensation amounting to Rs. 120 was received from him and of which Rs. 100 was decided among the Panchayat members. He received this taken by the agreed person. In this case no legal test given to the Panchayat members.

Another hearing of case of witchcraft was attended by the mother in the same village Madham Banna of village Palhoda complained before the headman of the village that Padama had done happens to be a boy. He was killed all the family members of Madham Banna. Padama was the son of Madham Banna had died one after another within a period of five years. Father of Madham Banna had some quarrels with one Madh Kanna who suspected that Madh Kanna was behind the magic case which was a relation to practice magic to all and then Madham Banna also related that he had a number of cows and bullocks but he was not have died within a period of six to seven years. He pointed out the names of one Madh Kanna Kanna and Madham Banna as witnesses who heard Padama, Jaga telling Madh

Kanna that he will try to spread the story of Madham Banna. The Panchayat consisted of the headman of village Nhapalle and Palhoda the sons of those village the priest of village Nhapalle and the parents concerned. The two opposed parties sat facing each other and in between sat the village elders and at one end facing all in the hall was the headman of village asked the magistrates Padama and Jaga who were there as the witnesses who they had practiced witchcraft to kill the family members of Madham Banna. It asked them the headman asked the witnesses to state that he has taken in the help of a witch Jaga to spread upon the family of Madham Banna. He also asked the fact. The two headmen asked the witnesses to relate as to what they have heard. They said that what they heard from the two culprits while returning from a hunt. There was a long discussion between the village elders and the witnesses. The culprits were separated and then the headman asked the witnesses to state that he will try to spread the story of Madham Banna. Hearing this they admitted their guilt and he magistrates asked to take with him to prison with trial being made he was to be kept two years in the village. Then started the discussion of reducing compensation to the guilty person who magistrates and Madh Kanna were tried for six each. Again there was argument between them and the trial was placed there made to be paid each Rs. 5000. It was then agreed to be paid Rs. 10000 each of which half was to be the compensation for purchase of cows and bullocks and

the rest was distributed among the headmen and village elders. No feast was arranged for the Panchayat members. On enquiry it was found that in these days almost all the cases of that Panchayat are heard by the headman of Sikapali as he has been selected as Sarpanch of Sikapali Grama Panchayat. It was observed that the headman of Sikapali is thought by the Koyas to be invested with Governmental powers to exercise in cases of disputes. The author heard him saying to the different disputed parties that he will report the matter to government or police if his decisions are not respected.

The traditional system of the Koyas for settlement of disputes can be said to be perfectly harmonious with the Panchayat system of the Government, provided the members of the Panchayat are chosen from among the tribals and not the non-tribals like Dome, Solpara or Telugu who certainly find ways to exploit them in every possible way. The collection of fines from the guilty persons was limited to certain extent according to traditional rules. But in these days the tribals are being exploited by the non-tribal members or the tribal headmen who fall a victim to the influences of non-tribal members in realising heavy amounts from the poor tribals.

Religious Beliefs and Ceremonies

The Koya Pantheon has incorporated within itself a number of Hindu gods and goddesses in the passage of years. But their original belief system centres round two cults namely the cult of earth (Bhu mata) and the cult of village

goddess (Godi mata). Whenever any religious ceremony is observed, these two goddesses are worshipped. The village goddess is believed to be under a particular bated tree inside the village and the goddess of earth is situated in Bujagad a small thatched house at the outskirts of a village. Another God who is called 'Simud' and is supposed to live above the sky is also worshipped only once in a year at the time of "Bijud Panda". He is the Rain God who makes the rainfall for Koyas.

The religious ceremonies which are observed by the Koyas are mainly four. They are—"Bajapanda, Godi Panda, Simud Panda and Jdu or lak Panda". Bajapanda is observed in the month of hemis corresponding to month of Baisakh and Jayshtha when the earth goddess is worshipped with offerings of cock, pig, eggs and mango. Goddess is requested by the priest to render a good harvest. Seeds of paddy are also placed before the goddess believing that those seeds will become good by the earth's touch. Mango is eaten ceremonially during this festival. Ceremonial hunting (Bija weta) is also done after this festival. Work during this festival is taken in the month of Kandi (Shadrah-Awin). The "Karrum Panda" is observed when sun is eaten ceremonially. New rice eating ceremony is observed in the month of Dasheda (Awla-Karkh). "Sakud Panda" or the new born eating ceremony is observed in the month of Dewad. Karthi Margashir Simud Panda or the worshipping ceremony of Rain God is observed in the month

of Magh (Magh Purnima). This festival is observed just after the completion of harvest of all types of crops. Two small clay models of Ram God and his wife are made and kept under a Mahul tree over a stone on the festival day. The villagers with the priest and the headman gather on the spot and the villagers carry crops of all types to the spot. The priest after worshipping the god fills the empty baskets with crops and then is followed by the headman and the villagers. An unmarried girl is made to stand in between the Pedo and the priest. The villagers throw water over them and laugh saying the marriage of Ram God is over today. Ganga Ramul Pandol and Tarta. Then begins the moral dancing and singing.

Apart from the above mentioned ceremonies observed in connection with their ceremonial eating of crops, fruits and other things, the Koyas worship the gods of Manvembhonda and few others situated in the Koya area in different places. A story in this connection is related below as was gathered from the Koyas as well as the priests of those gods and goddesses. The story is related in different ways in different places but the central theme is as follows.

Four brothers and two sisters came from the Warangal region of Andhra Pradesh. They were gods and goddesses. Their names Karanwada, Pedaraju, Balrajwada, Pedaraju and sisters were Mariwada, Maroli and Amala. The Priest at Manvembhonda named Manveram Pedaraju told the author that out of all these Mariwada, Maroli went near the village

Mariwada and established herself there. Pedaraju who was the eldest brother went near Bejanpada village and established himself there.

These two have been kept aloof from the rest four as they do some unusual activity. Bejanpada god kept a Dem wife. Human sacrifice was being made before Mariwada, Maroli. Hence these two were excommunicated from the rest four at Manvembhonda. They did not see these two since then.

The story told by the priest of village Mariwada was to certain extent different. He said about their coming down to the Koya area from the south but could not name all those which were mentioned by the priest at Manvembhonda. The priest at Mariwada who also happened to be a Telugu has married a Koya woman and has become a Koya. He said only about the two sisters namely Mariwada, Maroli and their brothers Karanwada and Balrajwada. Karanwada is known to be the god at Manvembhonda. He also related the story that Balrajwada god kept a Dem wife and was kept aloof from the rest brothers and sisters.

One does not know the actual implication of the story but it can be well imagined that the cult of these have been introduced by the Telugas of Andhra Pradesh since their introduction. During these days the Koyas worship these gods and goddesses with utmost devotion. The god at Manvembhonda is not only worshipped by Koyas but all other Hindu people residing in the region.

EPILOGUE

The set up of Dandakaranya Development Authority in the year 1958 by Government of India has effected changes of far reaching consequence in the Kora area by undertaking the project of re-settlement of displaced persons from East Pakistan. Thousands of homeless refugee families have been resettled in about one hundred villages set up amid an extensive forest belt and undulating plains. The task of clearing forests and reclaiming the land in this area have begun since 1962 onwards with such rapid pace that by 1969 the face of the entire Kora area has undergone a radical metamorphosis. A report on Dandak ranges indicates that every such village set up for displaced persons is carefully planned. Families

numbering 50 to 100 are accommodated in a village. Each village has a tank, deep masonry wells, two to four tube wells, internal approach roads and a primary school for children. The services of a Sarak are available to a group of two to three villages. While a pharmacist is available to a medical unit which gives free medical aid a mobile library-cum-publicity unit shows films to the settlers and the tribals.

"An agricultural settler family is allotted about six acres of agricultural land. In addition, 500 square yards are being provided for homestead. The following re-settlement benefits are given to each family

(a) A house built mainly by the family itself with timber and roofing material (e. g. GI sheet) costing on an average Rs. 1,700 which is treated as loan.

(b) An agricultural loan of Rs. 1,515 for the following purposes.

	Rs.
A pair of bullocks	450
A milk cow and calf	150
Implement	100
Seeds, Manure and Fertilizers	200
Warding operations	25
	1,515

(c) An Irrigation loan of Rs. 150 for sinking well in the homestead plot.

(d) Besides the above loans, the family is provided with maintenance subsidy for the first difficult and distressful half year and for the third agricultural season at 1/4 of the rate. In addition subsidy is given for the off-season at six months immediately following the first agricultural season.

Non-agricultural families settled in village, and those settled in semi-urban or urban areas get the following benefits :

(a) In village—

Agricultural plot	2 acres
Homestead plot	8 0 sq. yds.
House building loan	Rs. 2,000
Small trade loan in village	Rs. 1,000
Agricultural loan	Rs. 300
Maintenance grant per month according to the size of the family for three months following the date of payment of small trade loan.	Rs. 30 to 70

(b) In urban and semi-urban areas.

Homestead plot	800 sq. yds.
House building loan	Rs. 2,000
Business loan	Rs. 1,000
Additional business loan in deserving cases	Rs. 500
Maintenance grant per month according to the size of the family for three months following the date the business loan is advanced.	Rs. 30 to 70

As each settled family is allotted a homestead plot of 800 square yards within which it builds its own house with a plot area of about 67 square yards, it has sufficient area for kitchen garden and out house.

Koodagur Zone	..	388
Umerkot Zone	..	2,974
Pandhori Zone	..	2,392
Malkangiri Zone	..	1,460

Total 10,494

447 families were in the transit centres as on 30-9-1967 awaiting movement to the resettlement areas.

Tribal Welfare

Tribal population constitutes 61 per cent of the population of Koraput district and 72 per cent of the population of Bastar district. The Dandakaranya percentage would be about 66, compared to the all India percentage of 6-60. The welfare of the tribals constitutes an important trust of the Dandakaranya Development Authority.

As stated, 25 per cent of the area reclaimed by the D. D. A. is released to the State Government for the resettlement of tribals. 3,334 tribal families have been settled on such land up to September 1967. In addition funds are made over to the State Governments in the following manner for each tribal family resettled:

	Rs.
For construction of house and purchase of bullocks, implements and seeds and etc.	1,300
For subsistence till the first crop is harvested	300
For seven-year-bonding of 7 acre agricultural holding	315
For irrigation well	150
Total	1,945

In addition funds at the rate of Rs. 500 per family are placed at the disposal of the State Governments for the provision of common amenities like school building, community centres, village roads, wells etc.

The number of tribal families resettled so far is 1,836 in Orissa and 496 in Madhya Pradesh. The number of tribal houses completed is 1,500 on the Orissa side and 303 on the Madhya Pradesh side, totalling 1,803. 1,725 and 373 pairs of bullocks, respectively have been supplied to the tribal families.

The task of general development in the tribal area has demanded special attention. 80 miles of roads in Orissa and 71 miles in

Madhya Pradesh have been constructed while 63 miles and 52 miles respectively have been improved. Funds have been made available to the two State Governments for the construction of 70 wells, 30 tanks and sinking of 30 tube-wells. The tribals enjoy the benefit of irrigation becoming available with the execution of medium irrigation projects by the D. D. A. 85 per cent of the total commandable area of the Bhaskar Dam and 20 per cent of the irrigable areas of the Parakehor and the Malkangiri Dams belong to tribals.

Besides various other amenities are available to the tribal population. Cattle and birds are

supplied from the poultry farms at subsidised rates to popularise poultry keeping as a subsidiary occupation. Veterinary services have been extended. Educational institutions of the Project are open to the Adibasi children. 5 per cent of the seats at the Industrial Training Institute, Ambaguda have been reserved for tribal boys. The medical and public health facilities of the Project cover the tribals in equal measure with the settlers. Malaria Eradication Programme has been extended in tribal areas. Tribal leaders have been enlisted as convenors for tribal labour for construction works undertaken by the Jaidakaranya Development Authority.

The statements given in earlier pages with regard to general development of the area envisages a rapid economic development of the Koya. However, a survey conducted in four Koya villages in the year 1958 does not indicate any such progress. The average family income of a settled family in 1958 has been found to be Rs. 845 where as the average income of a Koya family is Rs. 500. The discrepancy does not however, rule out the possibility of an economic progress of the Koya in the long run because the settlers are more enlightened people and have been provided with sufficient economic assets to start with. The Koyas are still following their age-old traditional method of agriculture with their limited resources.

Although economic development has not been felt through a rise in family income ideas of improved agricultural practices have already crept into the Koya mind which was observed by the author while residing in a Koya village. One of these ideas was transplantation of paddy seedlings. Only few individuals experimented transplantation. Mad Kam Sokra (38) of Sikhapalli first started on high land which did not give a good result in the Kharif year of 1958. He was followed by Madkam Irma (50) on low land and got a good return. Madkam Deva, Assistant Headman of the village also was not successful in the experiment.

Next to transplantation was the idea of cultivating Jute which happens to be one of the important commercial crop grown by the refugees. The Koya call it "Benda Yende". Its cultivation has gained wide acceptance among the Koya of the village. Madkam Iru 30 started at first and got a good return. Martam Kanta and Mad Kam Deva were successful to a little extent. As this crop after harvest finds a ready market at Malkangiri the Koya of this village are planning to grow jute on extensive scale. Another crop which was not grown previously is gradually becoming popular among the Koya is Gingli (71). The Koya have taken this from the settlers.

The implementation of Dandakaranya Project in the heart of Koya area has opened an avenue for

an interesting study of inter-social and inter cultural relationship between the reastlers and the Koya. The contact between two alien cultures is apt to lead to problems of far reaching consequences. As such, it may be suggested that an intensive study on this line may be taken up by the Tribal Research Bureau to findout the trend of the culture contact. The author during a short visit, has been able to observe the relationship between these two groups which may be stated in brief in the following lines.

At the outset the contact has resulted in the gradually developing economic relationship. The Koya purchase varieties of paddy seeds from the Bengali reastlers at the rate of 1 Kg per rupee. This facility was not available previously because an individual had to wait till sowing of seeds by fellow villagers was over. The Koya of village Simapalla always depended upon the weekly market for their needs like salt, kerosene and clothings. During these days the reastlers have opened small shops to cater to the needs of the local people. The shop-keepers belong to the nearby Mahangari villages set up by Damoharaya Project. As has been mentioned elsewhere in this hand-book the Koya are great lovers of a favourite past time, i.e., cock fight. Now the Bengali reastlers rear cocks in large number and sell them to the Koya as a result of which this particular past time has gained wide momentum and has turned equal gatherings of the past to big fairs with thousands of people gathering as competitors as well as

onlookers. The author visited one such occasion and was surprised to find various stalls of sweetmeats and Pan and Cigarettes opened by the reastlers to provide additional pleasure to the people.

Similarly the Bengali reastlers purchase milk from the Koya for domestic as well as other uses. The Koya hardly collected their cows previously. But during these days the Koya regularly supply milk whenever available to the consumers who live close to them. Milk and ghee are being produced commercially by the Koya for which the find a ready market nearby. The Koya also sell goats to the reastlers whenever they are in need of money. 'Tala' or the seed of Mahul fruit which is pressed for oil is in great demand by the reastlers. As most of such trees are in possession of the Koya the reastlers purchase these from the Koya. Another commodity used by the reastlers for various purposes is bamboo and bamboo made crafts. As the bamboos grow in dense forests of the local hills where the reastlers can not have an access the Koya sell them to the Bengali reastlers.

As this area is devoid of irrigation facilities the tribals depend upon rain for a good harvest. The low land which are most suitable for paddy cultivation are mostly possessed by the Koya. But due to crude method of agriculture such low land do not give a good return. The reastlers who happen to be expert agriculturists can not check the temptation of utilizing such low land as short croppers. The

author was informed that some villagers of Tondpalli have given their land to the reettillers for share cropping. This incidence has a far reaching consequence. Previously the surplus land at the possession of an individual was being cultivated by fellow women living either in the same village or a nearby village. The reettillers are gradually becoming substitutes in their places which may hamper the social relationship among the Koya themselves. Another instance may be cited in this connection. The natural depressions which serve as a trap for many village rodents varieties of fish which are caught and shared by the fellow villagers after the owner is given with a fairly big share. Now a days the Koyas are selling these tanks to the Bengali reettillers on a very nominal rate by which the reettillers make a big margin of profit. This is apt to hamper the age-old traditional co-operation among the Koya.

There are instances of moneylending by the reettillers to the local tribals in exchange of mortgaging land and growing harvested crops at a cheaper rate. Practice of this kind may lead to exploitation of the tribals by the reettillers in future. The author was reported that several quarrels took place between the Koyas and the local reettillers. The reasons were that the cattle of Koya ate away the crops of the reettillers. As such the Bengali reettillers wounded some of the cattle of the Koya. As a retaliatory measure the Koya shot the cattle of the reettillers with their bows and arrows and threatened to attack the reettillers.

There was police and official intervention and a compromise was made. Clashes of this sort were common in the initial stage. However, there are coming to an end gradually. A feeling of envy was observed among the Koya when few villagers of Sikapalli stated before the author that no help is extended to them whereas the reettillers receive adequate help from the Government beginning from cultivable land to pecuniary help for constructing houses and purchasing seeds. Another feeling was that Government have deprived them of their age-old right on village forests by converting these into cultivable land for the reettillers. The Koya possess large herds of cattle and now most of them are destroyed.

Apart from these apathetic attitude there has also to a very limited extent, grown social relationship between the reettillers and the Koya. Bond relationship between Baudhi Bera of Sikapalli, has developed with one reettiller in No. 17 Malkangiri village. Both of them co-operate with each other in economic pursuits and exchange gifts. The relationship developed as a result of juxtaposition of cultivable land of both. While working side by side they talked and then developed friendship. Although this is one of such relationship observed by the author many more may be found in future as a result of similar circumstances. The Bengali reettillers organise open air drama which is very much liked by the Koya who go in large number to witness although they hardly understand the language of the

resettlers. Similarly on the occasion of Koya religious festivals the resettlers participate by offering offerings, etc. to the Koya god deities.

To end it may be stated that the implementation of Dandakaranya Project is apt to bring a general

development of the area by opening up roads, irrigation and health programmes. At the same time the relationship between the two communities if not properly channelled may lead to continued strife and funds siphoning in political areas in the area.

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View of the lake and bridge





R. L. BHOSNIP

A STUDY ON FUNERAL RITES AMONG THE DULE BAURIS OF WEST BENGAL.

The Dule Bauri in West Bengal represent a grade (Jhok) of the caste Bauri. The Bauris constitute an important scheduled caste in West Bengal and other states of India. They are primarily agriculturists, though some of them are now found to be engaged as unskilled labourers in coal mines, tea-gardens and factories. The level of literacy is very low and it is not more than 10 per cent for the whole of West Bengal, but only 3-4 per cent of the expected number of school-going students in the secondary stage had attended schools during the year of 1951. They have a very low ritual status and are regarded as untouchables.

In respect to the vital development of modern civilization the Dule Bauris represent a group which still remains far behind in the scale of modern action. It is seen that the main core of the Dule Bauri population is not acquainted with the scientific mode of thinking and feeling. They do not have the knowledge of the scientific way of life, is not directly connected with the development of

modern trade and industries and is politically not conscious of their community life or of national integration. Although the author has professed a tribal origin of these people, the Dule Bauris claim themselves as Hindus and admit their faith in the Brahmanical tradition. The present paper is an attempt to delineate the funeral rites as observed by the Dule Bauris of West Bengal and to see how far they follow the Brahmanical trail.

A person seriously ill is nursed by his/her relatives as well as neighbours who know something of nursing, as long as the patient lasts. Their indigenous medicines are applied, relatives, neighbours, ritualists and fellow villagers come and suggest other remedies which are also taken. If the ordinary ministrations do not help, a *soothsayer* (*guria*) is called who in his own way tries to find out from what disease the patient is suffering and how he can be cured. The head or the fellow members of the patient's family promise or perform the required offerings even upon one's death. When the treatment by a *soothsayer* fails to improve the

go to a neighbouring Bengali Brahmin family (usually to that family with which the patient's family maintains a *jalmami* relationship) and bring a little water of the holy Ganges. They pour a few drops on the tongue of the patient with a belief that none but mother-Ganges can cure the patient. At the present day there are many Bauria who follow the Balanaba saints and who at such a conjuncture instead of going to a Brahmin, offers the ordinary water in which one or two basil-leaves are added. With the spread of modern values and ideas there are some Bauria who used to bring the patient to the chamber of a rural doctor or to health centre. And if the family is financially in a position to call a doctor, the family does it. In matters of nursing and treatment of patients it is always noticed that they take more care when the patient is an earning member or a potential member to that end. The old fellows generally receive less favour, less care and less attention.

When the relatives see that the patient is on the threshold of death, i.e. he/she fails to swallow food any more, to speak any longer and to feel anything of importance and the lackness in keeping senses gradually sets in, they send some one to bring the spiritual guide of the family who being a member of the Balanaba sect serves the family. In certain religious affairs, Someone of the village may or may not be related to the person waiting for his death comes forward with a razor or blade and does the partial shaving of head-hair. In practice a bunch of hair from the

forehead region is shaved. It is done without any discrimination of sex or age. The spiritual guide does the necessary expiation for the person approaching the world of the dead. For his service he receives a *dhat*, a jar, one *pat* of uncooked rice and Rs. 1-25. Besides these he is also provided with all the necessary articles to prepare a meal which he himself cooks and takes before the person expires. When the taking of meal is over he comes to the patient and recites the *sanskrit* eulogy addressing the mother goddess. If the person dies out before the recitation is completed, the whole rite of expiation is to be observed on a day at two days' interval and the recitation is done at the quay of the river Ganges by local Brahman priest before the piece of bone preserved from the dead body is thrown into the Ganges water.

On the point of his departure the patient sees all the faces of his relatives around him/her and without any discrimination of sex or age he receives drops of water from the tip of head leaf from all present there. In that occasion rules of avoidance practised by certain kins are overlooked. As a matter of fact a man and his younger brother's wife are not allowed to interact with each other and they are not to see or to touch each other, but at this juncture of their ritual life they do not bother with such avoidance and receives the good-wishes in the form of drops of water from the head-leaf.

On the last moment the body of the patient is stretched on the floor of the hut. The head of the man

and oriented towards north. Here it is important to note their following beliefs. Death is the eternal sleep where the person must be left to the lap of the mother-earth. The world of the dead is situated somewhere on the north and if the head of the person about to die is not directed northward, he/she will still try to strive to attain a sound less death. It is also customary to keep the mouth open otherwise the soul of the dying person will not find a smooth departure. As soon as the person gives up the last breath his/her sons raise the dead body from the ground and shout three times the slogan "Belo hari hari ho!" In carrying the body,

they place the body on the ground in a manner that the face is directed towards the roof and the head towards the door. The body is then placed on the courtyard in front of the home altar. The oil incense burner is then smothered all over the body of the dead and the dead body is dressed in a new bathing cloth of a married woman whose husband is living she is dressed with a red-bordered sari. The oil vermilion paste is anointed over the face, head and on the parting of hair. The face is painted with sindoor. Then they gather the following articles for disposing the body: eight coconut shells, one brass-stick, Kurchil made of bamboo-sticks in earthen pitcher, an earthen jar, a little amount of clarified butter, a bottle of rice wine, a piece of special wood, a little amount of vermillion, a small quantity of incense, a handful of barley, some straw from the roof and a little earth from the floor where the person gives up his/her last breath. The dead body is then

placed on a bedstead made of bamboo and straw made ropes in a manner that the face is directed towards the sky. The body is tied to the bedstead at three places, neck, chest and leg, by means of straw made ropes. When the husband dies the wife takes her bangles made of cash-shell and places on the bier near the legs of the dead. Sons of the dead take the bier on their shoulder and shout thrice "Belo hari hari ho!" and then start for the burning ghāt. They carry the dead body in a manner that the face is in the front while the legs are left behind. Other family members follow them. Two women take them to a little distance. One of them sprinkles cooling water from an earthen pot and the other carries rice pith the area sprinkled with the help of a broomstick. From the village boundary they come back leaving the broomstick on the pot there. The women generally do not go in a funeral procession, but there is no imposed taboo on it. On the half way between the house and the burning ghāt they take a rest for a while. The eldest son holds a stick in the front of which a piece of cloth held wet by clarified butter is wound where the fire is given. The eldest member of the Varad covers both the eyes of the eldest son by his two palms. The son with covered eyes and holding the stick goes round the dead body thrice and puts fire into the mouth of the dead. Then the eldest son returns home and comes to burning ghāt later on. The funeral procession takes a fresh start shouting the slogan "Belo hari hari ho!"

On their arrival at the burning place they place the bier on the ground in a manner that the head is directed towards north. One of them sits on one corner of the bier and keeps the dead body in contact. Others take a lead to arrange all the necessities to dispose the dead body. They put eight cowrie shells on the ground at the burning place in order to make a purchase of earth from the burning place. They bring eight pieces of stones and with these make an altar. In making this altar they use a hoe for necessary digging. On the altar they put pieces of wood. They take everything away from the body of the dead even the kodhams (threads) from the waist. Then the body is placed on the pite being the back directed towards the sky. The eldest son takes a dip and takes the kurchi (throomstick) the free end of which is dressed with six pieces of cloth wet by clarified butter. The eldest male member of the Vayad covers both the eyes of the eldest son with his two palms. The son with his covered eyes goes round the pite seven times. Some Vayad member brings fire from the masha. The fire place is made at an one corner of the burning place on their arrival. The eldest son kindles the free end of the kurchi with that fire and puts fire on the mouth of the dead. He then takes a dip and returns home. They place three logs of wood at three different places, neck, waist and legs. The bottle of kerosene is then emptied over the body. All the persons present one by one brings the fired wooden logs from three mashes and puts it on the pite. The members of

the funeral procession begin to discuss over the funeral rites to be observed and funeral feast to be made. A Vayad member prepares a meal with the help of five of the masha. When the body is turned into ashes, the burnt heart takes the shape of a little heart. The dadi-dhar who with the help of a dadi (bamboo pole) controls the fire of the burning pite brings the so-burnt heart out of the pite and puts it on a fresh leaf. With the help of earthen pitcher he brings water and washes the pite. He then draws a figure on the pite and adds eight cowrie-shells at eight different parts of the figure. He brings the meal prepared in the masha and puts the contents on three fresh leaves. These three leaves with the contents are then placed on the chest of the figure drawn. Sesame and barley are sown over the pite. The pitcher used in washing the pite is placed there in a way that the mouth rests on the ground. All the persons present there stand facing the funeral and waving the pite behind while the dadi-dhar looks towards the pite and finally strikes the earthen picture by his dadi with the saying "Don't look behind". Then all of them take a start for their homes. The eldest male member of the Vayad carries a bundle the so-burnt heart on a leaf. On their way back they stop at the junction of three roads where they keep the haft of the hoe and take the blade with them. Each and every member of the procession waves the haft and goes back to their village without casting any glance to their back.

On their return first they go to the village tank. Non-Vapad members part their hair. Each and everyone takes a dip in the water of the tank facing towards the east. Non-Vapad members then abstain unclean and wear three lothes and take another dip. When the bathing is completed they shout *shree the naga. Nam-hari-hari-ho!* All of them come to a peepal tree and go round it seven times. Then one by one embrace the tree and show a small quantity of its bark. When it is finished they return to the house of the dead. There they take a little heat from the fire-pot where fire is prepared with bark and human hair recently cut. Then they swallow a little earth previously brought from the bank of the Ganges. Individuals return their houses and come back to the house of the deceased when stars are seen in the sky and get their refreshments.

On the day the death takes place the sons and their wives of the deceased and the deceased's wife do not eat or drink anything. Other members of the deceased's family can only take flattened rice. On the fourth of the full moon when the person gave up his last breath an earthen lamp is lighted and which is observed for ten successive nights.

On the next day till the stars are seen in the sky the sons and their wives of the deceased and the deceased's wife observe a fast. When stars are in the sky they first offer cooked food to the ancestors and to their relatives who are already there in the world of the dead. Then they give food to those who attended the funeral

procession and finally they take their own food consisting of perched rice, flattened rice and refined country sugar with or without water.

On the next day when the sun rises in the sky they break their fasting and observe the taking of hot-rice (*litam-rice*). First the son who transplanted a betanagach a kind of coral plant on the bank of the tank where each and every member of the family pours water. On coming back to their house they prepare rice in which one or two mean leaves are added. They also prepare curry. In that preparation they avoid fish, meat, egg, onion, garlic, etc. They first offer a portion of these foods to their ancestors and dead relatives and then to persons attended the funeral procession and lastly house members take.

On the next day in the early morning after taking bath all the house-members pour water on the trunk of the betanagach. Returning home they prepare their vegetarian food in a new vessel. From this day till the ten days' defilement is over they take vegetarian food. In a day they can only take two meals one with the sun-rise and one with the sun-set. The first meal includes cooked rice and the second meal parched rice.

On the fourth day in the morning all the Vapad members including those of the dead persons family members assemble on the bank of the tank. There a Vapad member does the shaving for the sons of the deceased. When one parent is living and another is dead the sons take a shaving in a way that a

clump of hair on the forehead region is left intact. Otherwise they take the complete shaving. Parting a head-hair and shaving on beard are observed by all male Vajras members. Parting of nails is observed by all women; any discrimination of sex. All of them take a dip in the water of the tank and then accept mustard as *avah* (that has oil) and take a seat up on the bank of the tank. They change their wet clothes and wear either new or fresh clothes. The eldest son and his wife leave their wet clothes in the water of the tank. Then all of them return home. In a new earthen pot they put rice, curries, vegetables and prepare a meal. The deceased's sons and their wives first offer small quantities of this meal to their ancestors and close relatives and then eat. Vajras members take a bit of this meal. Vajras members do that lay sons and their wives observe a complete fast while Vajras members can take vegetarian food. Before the son sets the *darudhara* through the *benegach* previously transplanted on the bank of the tank into the water of the tank.

On the eleventh day all relatives come from different villages. The *darudhara* makes an offering to *kusa grass*. All the Vajras members including members of the deceased's family take a bath in the tank and stand on the margin of water till the *darudhara* sprinkles some water on their bodies by means of

that offering. When the sprinkling of water is completed the *darudhara* throws the offering in the water takes a dip and comes on the bank where he and others anoint their bodies with anurgha paste. Later on they take another dip and come on the bank. The members of the deceased's house offer curds, flattened rice, and unrefined country sugar to the *darudhara*. They take with him a *cham* when they make a *grana* feast for the souls invited.

On the twelfth day there is another grand feast when the introduction of fish, meat and the likes are made. Thus the conclusion of funeral rites is made.

The above discussion clearly indicates that the Dule Bauris have a comparatively good number of rites from the Brahmanical tradition, though they have retained many of the rites which their ancestors had practised once. This later group of rites does not have any connection with the Brahmanical theory and practice. Furthermore, it may be noted that the Dule Bauris have accepted those rites from the Brahmanical tradition which do not cost very much in their material make-up, and with regard to some rites they have taken up the structural contents but have completely failed to retain the meanings or functional contents. However, on the way towards Hinduisation the Dule Bauris have made a considerable progress, though they have not yet earned the status of a clean caste.

K. L. BHOWMIK

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The Dule Bauris in West Bengal represent a grade (Jhik) of the caste Bauri. The Bauris constitute an important scheduled caste in West Bengal and embrace several

tribes. They speak a dialect of 400-500 words. They are primarily agriculturists though some of them are now found to be engaged as unskilled labourers in coal mines, tea gardens and factories. The level of literacy is very low and it is much below the national data for the whole of West Bengal that only 3.48 per cent of the expected number of school going students in the secondary stage had attended schools during the year of 1962. They have a very low social status and are regarded as untouchables.

In respect to the vast development of modern civilization the Dule Bauris present a group which still remains far behind in the scale of modernization. It is seen that the main core of the Dule Bauri population is not acquainted with the scientific mode of training and education does not see the benefits of a formal education. Bauri lacks the knowledge of the urban way of life, is not directly connected with the development of

modern trade and industries, and is politically not conscious of their community life or of national integration. Although the authorities profess a tribal origin of these people, the Dule Bauris claim themselves as Hindus and admit their faith in the Brahminical tradition. The present paper is an attempt to delineate the funeral rites as observed by the Dule Bauris of West Bengal and to see how far they follow the Brahminical tradition.

A person seriously ill is nursed by his/her relatives as well as neighbours who know something of nursing, as long as the patient lasts. Their indigenous medicines are avoided; relatives, neighbours, ritualists and fellow villagers come and suggest other remedies which are also taken. If the orthodox treatments do not help a *swasthakar* (specialist) is called who in his own way tries to find out from what disease the patient is suffering and how it can be cured. The head or the fellow members of the patient's family promise to perform the required offerings even when the patient is dead. When the treatment by a *swasthakar* fails to improve the

K. K. DAS

ORIGIN & DEVELOPMENT OF RAJBANSHI COMMUNITY—A REVIEW

The Rajbanshis are the dominant strains in West Bengal'. But their history of origin is a complex phenomenon to the Anthropologists.¹ It is now a question that whether they belong to Hindu family or not², but it is said that their affiliation with the said is a clinical view for the establishment of the origin truth of the community in Bengal.³ During 1824-31⁴ the three non Indian Mongoloid tribes, the Koch, the Meek, the Tharu, inhabited between the country Lashawal and Tibet covered by the Jungles⁵. Chatterjee has given a vivid description about the early description of the three non Indian Mongoloid Tribes⁶.

Ledgion⁷ reports in 1849 A.D. that Hajo founded the Kingdom. The Koch belong to Tamulian⁸ extraction and lived before the Aryans came. The grandson Hajo became Hindu. He was then named as Koch and then converted into Rajbanshi.⁹ According to Dalton¹⁰ the appearance of the Kochs are similar with that of non-Aryans and belong to Dravidian stock, a branch of the great Shruya family¹¹. But Barrow has given a differential opinion on it¹². Hunter observed it as Hinduism¹³

during fifteenth century. He notes that the name Rajbanshi, popularly known as 'Raja Race' in North Bengal, is adopted by the cultivators and respectable men of Koch being restricted to Labourers and specialists to the polargun bearers¹⁴. He also places the Rajbanshi under 'Semi-Hinduized Aborigines'¹⁵. Ramay¹⁶ describes that inter marriages with Koch tribes and Hindus has changed their traditional habits. The Rajbanshis are Hinduized aboriginal tribes¹⁷. But Majumdar¹⁸ has given maximum stress on faith which is probably the destination of their origin.

According to the authors like O'Donnes¹⁹, Dalton, Kinzy²⁰, and Drs. Roychowdhury and Raha²¹ though the Rajbanshis sustain their affiliation to their tribal group, still there is a reason that they are converted Kochs. Grierson²² are of the opinion that Original Kochs were the same as the Sedos. According to his opinion²³ those Kochs are now Hindus are principally known under the name Rajbanshi. According to O. Mally²⁴, the Rajbanshis are the offspring of Bengali woman by Burmese men or generally

of Arahana mothers by Bengali fathers. They also claimed as Kacharia by descent²⁰. Thompson²¹ remarks that the Rajbanshis are the indigenous people of North Bengal. While he has criticized certain reports, he²² remarked that the caste so part of the census arouse so much excitement as the return of caste which caused a great deal of heart burning and in some quarters with threats of disturbance of the peace. Porter²³ has mentioned that there are more gotras than Kanyagin in the Rajbanshis. Gotra is said to be preceptor of Ancestors²⁴. Porter²⁵ also states Koch Paha Rajbanshis were originally the same. Chatterjee²⁶ is also in the opinion of Gierke²⁷.

Sanyal²⁸ in his book "Rajbanshis of North Bengal" has shown that several other tribes and castes broke away from their original fold and recorded themselves as Rajbanshis. They were a part of Jalia Kacharia tyer Namandunia, Bagdia, Malas Baruas, Megs, Dhums²⁹ pods³⁰, Rabha, Gura Palla, Deba, Koch Mech and Kanta³¹.

According to the earlier reports there is some controversy in the origin and Gotras. It can be said that North Bengal Koch are known as Rajbanshi in South Bengal. About Gotra a man can not marry to the same Gotra girl. But in this Community it is a complexity.

Notes

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U. N. PATTANAIK

RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES, ORDEALS AND A LEGEND ABOUT ORIYA INFILTRATION IN KONDH HILLS

The Kondh believes that the illness or disease of any member of his family is due to the wrath of the Gods if such illness does not disappear as a result of the efforts of the village "Garu" or "Thomba" or "Koota Gatanja" to drive away the spirits which might have cast their evil eyes on the person ailing. The head of the family takes a vow that he would perform "Kedu" to propitiate the Gods and the manes of the ancestors. This propitiation is done after the recovery of the person ailing. Such a vow is taken on the advice of the Thomba or the Koota Gatanja. Thus the "Kedu Laka" has an individualistic origin but is observed as a communal ceremony as can be seen from the following:

The Kedu Laka is the buffalo sacrifice. It is done in the month of Chaitra, generally the month of March, and on the fullmoon day. It so happens that there are more than one such vows to be redeemed in a village and there are many such in the same month. A month

generally represents the habitation of a sub-tribe (Khamti). In case the sick person dies, the vow need not be redeemed but otherwise it has to be redeemed at any cost. The village Chaita (headman) goes about the entire month and informs every village of the intended performance of the Laka. He advises the headmen to get ready with their buffaloes and liquor etc. This is done about 15 days before he dies hard.

On receipt of the intimations the villages get ready with their rice and Mahua liquor and the men and women get ready their best apparel. The clothes are boiled in a solution of ash in huge big pots. The girls give an extra polish to their brass and a comb with ornaments. The distillation of liquor whether in the village or near a jungle stream is the chief occupation and every one looks with anticipation to the day of the Laka's Sacrifice.

On the day so fixed, 4 or 5 young men put on fresh washed

clothes and follow the Thomba (hereditary priest) who wears a new clothes and has another such rolled his head as turban. The Thomba is a hereditary functionary and it is generally believed that every Thomba possesses super-natural powers. The group take their bath at any spring on their way to the forest. They move on with their wet clothes in search of the Kedu post.

The sacrificial post has to be selected by the Thomba. It should be a healthy tree without any hollow or deformity and in disrepair. No birds should have built their nests on it. On locating such a tree the Thomba gives 3 handful of raw rice as offering to the tree and addresses it "O" tree be sound, wholesome and auspicious if the vow of so was good, meaning the man who took the vow. After this request to the tree, the Thomba gives the first stroke and the other follow suit. The tree is felled and a length of about 7 feet is cut therefrom and the bark peeled off at the spot. The piece is then sized with 4 edges. The four companions of the Thomba carry the log in a blur to the village by about noon. The piece of wood is then sized by Barni Hammer and chisel combined.

The Puja then begins. The Thomba gives an offering of liquor and water to the ancestors of the villagers, of the particular family. During the Puja and then gives some of the offering to the husband and the wife. The wife of the vower gives some cooked rice to the Thomba who offers it to the Geda and gives a portion to the

husband and the wife to eat. The couple would be fasting till then. The youths who had brought the piece of wood cut at the vower's house. The Thomba goes to his hut and serves out the cooked rice to his wife and he eats him self. If the Thomba or his wife commit any mistake in this one of the pet animals of the Thomba is sure to die. It is about sunset by the time the Thomba takes his food. The vower comes and fetches him to his home where the Thomba sleeps for the night near the piece of sacrificial wood.

The man who is the Thomba needs some describing. He is the hereditary sovereign of the village and the priest and he is associated with the possession of supernatural powers. He is either a Konth or a Konth Kumbhar and is either of the same "Klambu" or tribe as the villagers or adopted by it. He is held in respect by the villagers. He is also the village doctor and "Mastray" and propitiations are the first part of the treatment.

The next morning the celebra-tions start in the village. Men and women go about in the village dancing and drinking as time passes on. (It may be remembered that a Konth village is generally 2 parallel rows of house with the "Baha" road in between and the total number of house on the average is 14). Drinking and eating progresses but the Thomba, his wife, the vower, and his wife remain fasting.

The girls are dressed in their best with their head necklaces, (petthaka) necklaces of silver

in green rings and 8 anns hits Kaboko or the forehead silver ornament or runs along the margin of the ear on the forehead. Balang silver solid bracelets aluminum ankara. He rings on the head and Gogoloka anklets. Wild flowers deck the hair or are drawn in the arch of the head and ear. The girls dance in groups of 4 or 3, by making time with the Gogoloka beating one against the other while young men with Kharjuna sing songs. The elders count the matrons and marking time and the middle-aged males with a beaded Tandi or a wooden jaw mark time.

At noon the Tomba marks a spot in front of the vower's house and digs a big hole. Others present assist him. He throws three handfuls of rice into the pit marking the pit and mentally requesting co-operation of the earth God (Tana Peta) in the successful performance of the sacrifice. The post is carried to the host by the Tomba and others and is planted in the hole. Earlier in the morning the Tomba and the vower go to the forest after bamboo and fetch green fiber. The planted fiber is used as living the sacrificial barrier to the post.

The Tomba then throws rice three on the head and three on the back of the animal and calls upon the spirits of the ancestors of the vower particularly the spirit of the particular ancestor whom he has seen in a vision as having caused the vower to come and receive the sacrifice being offered in propitiation. He then addresses a general

prayer to the ancestors of the tribe and enjoins them not to cause illness to any one in the village. He begs of them to safeguard the interests of the tribe, to produce good crops. He then gives a cut at the neck of the animal with an axe. All the men join in backing at the animal, and it falls down struggling. The people cut slices from the body of the animal and some blood and run to their Dharma or places of links, worship in the respective villages of the same tribe. At the village Dharma, the village Tomba would be sitting expecting the sacrificial flesh blood. On getting it he sprinkles rice on the Dharma three and pours the blood on the Dharma.

After the sacrifice the villagers divide the remaining portions of the sacrificed animal and go to their respective homes. While food is being cooked during the meat making is kept up by the young folk late into the night.

The kedu post is left to decay and rot.

Tribal by District in the Khond Hills 1947

Disputes are common over the ownership of Sage plant trees. These trees are planted by individuals and even though they take about 40 years to mature the original planter is often alive to drink the juice of the tree. No one lays any claim in such a case as the planter is alive. The interval between the planting and the maturity of the tree is so long that not unusually there are several

claims to the ownership of a tree. The contesting parties invite the elders of the village near the tree and the claimant touches the leaf of the tree in its unopened state and very solemnly utters the following words: "It may ancestor planted this, the wine will overflow otherwise it will dry up". The next morning the elders and the contestants go to verify and if the juice has not stopped flowing the case is decided in favour of the claimant. If the juice has not collected in the pot overnight it is decided that the claim was a false one.

There is a saying of an oracle in this and the working of the sub-conscious mind with all the fervour and sincerity of an honest village probably calls forth the soul force behind it, and this regulates the flow of the juice or its cessation. There are several instances quoted of the Adibash supernatural powers in the manifestation of his will power even today. It is a current theory that a Konda is able to transform himself into a tiger or a python according to his will.

There are not instances of trial by battle although there are quarrels between individuals which end in murder. A form of trial by ordeal is the *SHENI MOONJA*. Here the two contestants go to particular tank or deep pool in the bed of a stream. One such place is Jargy Khats in Barakhamas Kutha. Another is an Uda Dolangis A-thard is at Diddingis (pusangis Mutka) yet another is near G Udayagiri. At each of these places the people believe

there are powerful deities or spirits which assist actively in bringing the right to light.

The contesting parties go with the village elders to the spot, offer Puja of raw rice and cow's milk. The offerings are given to Dharma Dena (Dharma), a sapendara and sapendara Moon and Son Jagga-punga and Kuktapunga (Two groups of stars as well as two other groups of each star known as Asha Dadas and Mishapadas. After these offerings the local names of the high hills nearby are also uttered. The remains of the Puja offerings are given to the contesting parties. The Pujari who does the Puja cuts two trees either Sal or Bamboo and takes them to the water. In the water they are planted two cubits apart and are held by the two contestants. The Pujari stands between the two Samaras.

The Panchayatdars then ask the contestants: "Are you bent on the Premam? Or are you bent on the Preetam?" The Pujari then asks them to dive in the water. They go into the water and the Pujari pours some milk on both heads saying "Let the innocent remain under water long and the guilty come up quick". The popular belief is that the milk poured by the Pujari over the heads of the contestants finds a way through the intervention of the deities into the nose and ears of the guilty who is forced by unseen powers to rise up after a short interval. The innocent remains so long after the guilty comes up that the Pujari has to lift him up practically. Thus the supernatural powers of the Pujari

are believed to have invoked the assistance of Gods in deciding which of the contestants is in the wrong.

The village head or the Murha head presides over such functions and he gives a written certificate that the successful contestant is not guilty. The official who presides this is paid Rs. 5 and this payment is known as Sarada Paja meaning up for the Praman.

The Panchyaidars who witness the trial are paid Rs. 5 and the amount is spent on a feast at which Panchyaidars of both the parties join. The description of the money paid to the village or feudat head indicates that originally such heads were Adibasis and were paying a pig more than money. The fact that Panchyaidars of both the sides join at the time of Praman they carry no personal animosity and abide by the decision as one coming with the divine aid.

The secret of the Praman seems to be quite simple. The man who is guilty and has no faith in his own cause is in a way mesmerized when the Pujari drops milk on his head and his subconscious mind is so much impressed that he is unconsciously lifted up. It is this influence of the subconscious that makes him feel as if the milk enters his nose and ears. To their unsophisticated simplicity and sincerity and with their belief that the Gods would intervene directly the contesting Kondhs surrender themselves to the influence of the subconscious quite entirely. The result is simple and easily explainable by modern psychology.

The next trial by ordeal which was in vogue till about 30 years back was the Gropa Saradae as it is called. The place of this ordeal was at Pungga in Balliguda Taluk and the patro of Pungga who worships the Loha Penn of the Khand was presiding at this ceremony. People all over Balliguda Taluk used to come for this trial by ordeal to obtain a oral decree over disputes about 30 years back there was a Deputy Tahsildar by name, Shri Apparao who got this mode of trial prohibited.

There is even now a very big Sal tree at Pungga which is believed to be the abode of the deity, Loha Penn. The contesting parties would come to the Patro and affirm before him that they would go through the Sarada or Praman. The complainant or challenger gets one egg and about half a *seer* of raw rice. These are offered to Loha Penn, the Khand who is the subordinate worshipper of Loha Penn fetches water from the stream nearby. A fireplace is prepared and fire is lighted. He gets a small quantity of a black cow's dung and adds it to the water. The water boils both parties are standing close to the pot and they throw a few grains of raw rice into the boiling water calling upon Dharma Penn to witness the contents and to adjudicate. The innocent man's rice goes down into the boiling water which the rice thrown by the wrong causes the boiling water to rise up. After this the man who denies the challenge would dip his fore arm up to his elbow in the boiling water. The hand is however immediately pulled up. The challenger then dips

his hand in a similar manner. After this all the people there leave the *puar*. The hands of the contestants are examined the next day by the *Petro* in presence of the *pachayat*. The innocent man's hand is normal while other man has blisters on his hand. This decides the case and both parties accept the same judgment.

The blisters would disappear two days and the hand would be all right with in a week.

Kakalabaka is a place near *G. 1* (aygi) about 100 yards from the *G. 1* (avagiri) farm. In the bed of a *Kala* there huge sheep pens, here are some small shrubs nearby and there is a deep place on the bank of the *Kala* about 4' in deep. It is said that the *Kandis* of *G. 1* (aygi) *Taluk* go for a *Prantan* *Veru* *Mooja*. It is believed that underneath the stone live two huge insects each 8' long with a dazzling precious stone on their heads. They reflected to be having six legs and protruding fingers, and that whenever see the creatures does not live for more than a week thereafter.

A legend about Odhya Institution into the Rajguda agency of Gunjam district

Mahasingi is a *Mutha* collection of villages over which there is a headman of a semi-feudal nature, namely the *Petro* of *Mahasingi*. He is an *Odya* and claims that he is a *Khetriya*. The following is the legend which describes the manner in which his first ancestor came to *Mahasingi* and began reigning as the overlord of that area.

The story is that about 25 generations back the adibasis of *Mahasingi* *Mutha* prominent among whom were the *Naghura* and *Kanbura* committed innumerable offences and that the land was spelt out of the wrath of Goddess *Patkhanda*.

Patkhanda means the chief sword or the best sword, and the name of the deity suggests that she was worshipped because her sword was the best or her power to smite was as deadly as of the best sword. As a result of that divine wrath that year everything went barren, the animals and the human being did not bear off spring the crops failed, the fruit yielding trees did not yield the fruit and even the streams dried up. The Goddess *Patkhanda* appeared in vision and dream and conveyed to all the tribal elders that she was displeased with their obscene mode of life and their religious manners and was therefore punishing them. There were propitiations and devout offerings to the Goddess as usual with local people.

In reply to their prayers and offerings to discharge the manner in which they would again get the things restored to them the Goddess in dream told that she would not be displeased if they were to get a man who would be able to please her by his clean ways of living and offerings and worship of the purest form.

Then the elders employed her again at the time worship and sacrifice to suggest the name of the person who would thus be able to please her. The Goddess indicated to them in the dreams that they should tie a piece of black yarn to

an arrow and a piece of yellow yarn to another arrow and to shoot these 2 arrows high into the air, and follow them up. Where these two arrows would fall there would be a man and he was to be brought and made their king. The hunting Kondhis who were Nagbura and Kanbura (meaning men with hairy ears and man with hairy nose) carried out the instructions. In the vision, shoot the arrows and follow after them. The arrows went and struck the ground near a spring or Jamsingti at which place a man by name Madan Singh was bathing. The Nagbura and Kanbura pounced upon him and carried him off bodily to Mahasingti. There he was given all royal honours but kept under a sort of guard lest he might escape and was put to some tests by the tribes men.

The following were the tests:-

He was shown a big clump of bamboos and asked to cut it. Madan Singh did not attempt cutting over the ground but started cutting at the roots in such a manner that by cutting a few of the roots, the whole clump toppled over being out-placed by the weight of bamboos over head. This was taken by the aborigines as a feat because it would have meant them a week's time to do what M. Singh did in about 1 hour.

The next test was, he was given 8 earthen plates and asked to keep one over the other and then to urinate on the topmost, the idea being that if he was a real strong and virile man, his urine would appear on the bottom-most plate. M. Singh came out successful even in this test.

The aborigines then declared him to be their chief priest though not king. They built a house for him, provided lands for him, gave him food for immediate use and asked him to make himself comfortable. He was honoured to be the head priest on all occasions and naturally as a result of his position. In the future he was to be the law and order within the Mutha and to guide and govern the people.

He was designated Patra or probably he designated himself as such and his descendant even today continues to be the lords of Bora Khama and Mahasingti Muthas. The Kodutaka is performed on the Akhastutaka in the month of Baisakh. Even today it appears like tribal worship of the names of ancestors.

The Patras and Kondhis in spite of the advance of times looked upon each other as the Rulers and the Ruled to some extent. The chief Malik of the Mutha who is probably a descendant of the Nagbura and Kanbura rules the Mutha in all tribal matters and is the head of the tribe Panchayat covering over a number of villagers. It is he who invests the Patra with a Sadhi, when he first assumes the charge of Patra and on all subsequent years once annually.

The annual Sadhi Investiture Ceremony even till the recent past was the following:—

On the date of investiture of the Sadhi all Kondhis in the mutha go in a body with their respective Maliks and the Chief Malik. Drums

beating, music playing and in the peculiar dress of the adibasis, the body proceeds to the headquarters of the Patra in a procession. The Patra comes out from his house and receives them on the way in the village.

They are then led to a place near the Patra's house where the Nadbi Investiture Ceremony takes place. The Patra seats himself and the Chief Malik ties a piece of new cloth round his head repeating the following formula in Qui Language :—

"We were unclean, our land went barren. Patakhanda directed us to get Madan Singh from Karsung. We brought him and made him our chief man. We did not know the foreigner's language which he knew and he was our leading light. He managed our affairs and looked to our well being. We make you our chief. Communicate our grievances to the Sarkar and tell us the orders of the Sarkar. Look to our welfare as you would look to your children and take mammals from us".

After this ceremony the Patra gives them a goat and some rations and the aborigines go to the nearest spring to have a feast. At the time of this Investiture Ceremony each Malik pays Rs. 1/- as Bheli to the Patra.

The law created by this ceremony is so strong ~~that even today~~ the Patra's words have the sanction of the law in his area and the mutual belief is that if any party

plays the other false he would be punished by death preceded by vomiting blood.

It is seen from this legend that originally the Konthis alone were the inhabitants of the Mal areas of Ganjam. The Nagbura and Kambura might be suggestive of a species of wild men who had hairy faces. It may be that the Hindu is to the ape man. Whatever it is, it is clear that the adibasis felt the need of having a man intelligent as their leader and went to the extent of kidnapping one such.

The story of Patkhanda of best sword indicates that once upon a time the adibasis felt that their tribal Gods were inefficient and that there was a Goddess as powerful as the best sword who was able to bring natural calamities in the wake of her wrath. Both the words Pat and Khanda are Oriya terms and therefore, it suggests that the aborigines who did not know the use of Khanda had by then felt the weight of the sword. This may mean that they were subject to any invasion and were controlled by Oriya chiefs on the border areas.

The story about the tests of the prowess of a man are common in all ancient countries. The superior man was to be the leader and he who was superior in possession was to be found out so as to be the defender of the country in time of needs. The tests are rather peculiar but probably at the adibasi level about 25 generations back this was the best that could be conceived. The manner in which the Oriyas were brought

into the Kooda land as the chief priest and ultimately became the Patra is very suggestive. The word Patra is a Oriya term and it stands for the Chief Executive Officer of a King. This word in Kui Language is Patrenju, and the use of this word by the aborigines 25 generations ago suggests that there were Oriya kings in the neighbourhood who had Chief Executive Officers. The aborigines who were then probably confined entirely to the hills never saw a kind of a neighbouring Oriya country but only saw his Patra or felt his Patra's weight of arms.

From the post of chief priest Madan Singh, the first Patra of

Mahaningi or his subsequent descendants came to be the Patrenju and the formula repeated at the time of Sachhi investiture suggests that his help as Liaison Officer between the British forces and the aborigines was of more recent origin.

The term Mamool stands for an *ashwah* and is degenerated from friendly good will offerings to compulsory in the present day. They probably meant good will acts, such as tilling the land of the Patra, repairing his house giving him some rice, etc., to do ceremonials and such other things which are now being looked upon as legal dues by the descendants of the Patras. The State of Orissa decided to do away with the Mamool.

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